

IN THESE TIMES

Caught in the draft



Steve Cagan

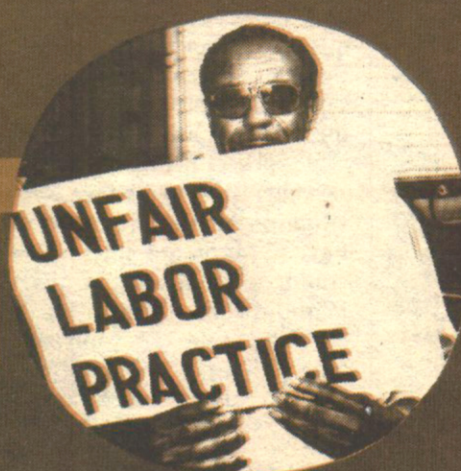
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FEBRUARY 3-9, 1982

\$1.00

ANATOMY OF A STRIKE



Union busting by the book
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Indira Gandhi clamps down again
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THE INSIDE STORY



Michael Stern/Trucker

Teamster leaders claim the new contract will save jobs, but some of the rule changes will probably reduce jobs.

To concede or not to concede

By David Moberg

DETROIT

Should workers make concessions to save troubled companies or industries? Tough-minded trade unionists, accustomed to scrapping with their employers for every tiny step forward, understandably flinch at the prospect. "You don't go down the ladder, because it will take you forever to climb back up," argues Don Douglas, president of the 9,000-member UAW Local 594 in Pontiac, Mich., and a leader in the newly formed Locals Opposed to Concessions.

Among workers at GM, which is expected to be profitable this year, the sentiment appears to run deep: despite urgings by UAW leadership, 43 percent of the union's GM council voted against resuming the talks with GM that had broken off two days earlier.

For many, the contract and those battles enshrined in it are sacred. But there is also the strategic bet that nothing can be gained, especially in bad times, that is worth the concession price. (The UAW bargainers, on the contrary, argue that when the companies are desperate, the union may be able to extract their own *quid pro quo* concessions.) But if the trade offs were good enough—say, lifetime jobs in exchange for a few pennies less an hour—principle would take the hindmost. The new Teamster contract, however, appears to fulfill the worst fears about what the concession game produces. The Teamsters agreed to freeze wages (but theoretically can reopen that portion of the contract), reduce the number of cost-of-living payments and divert part of that money to pensions, reduce pay for new workers, cut back some pension payments for part-timers and guaranteed pay for other workers and change work rules to allow some direct delivery of freight in cities by over-the-road truckers.

Teamster leaders claim the contract will save jobs. But some of the work rule changes will probably reduce jobs. And the contract apparently contains few direct job protection clauses, except for restraints on

union companies setting up parallel non-union operations. If inflation persists at a 9 percent annual rate, truck and dock workers will lose close to 25 percent in real income, according to estimates by Teamsters for a Democratic Union.

Although the Teamsters have lost work to non-union drivers in truckload freight hauling, where it is easy for an owner-operator to enter, they still have the vast majority of truckers working for the big national companies that emphasize less-than-truckload shipments (LTL). With regard to these companies, a Standard and Poor's industry survey concluded, "Any union concessions would serve primarily to bolster long-term profitability, rather than preserve Teamster jobs. In the short-run, a uniform reduction in costs for all LTL carriers would not ensure a more vibrant industry. Only higher tonnage levels and a shakeout of excess capacity can accomplish that."

Trucking is not a dying industry, TDU organizer Ken Paff emphasizes, even if it is in a recession slump and a phase of competitive restructuring; there is no question from other transportation modes. "The big thing is: can the union organize the unorganized?" Paff says. Many observers wonder how the Teamsters—or the UAW or any other union—can appeal to unorganized workers if it is giving up its past gains.

The autoworkers face a more difficult and complex situation. If the industry is to be competitive, it will have to automate much more, and the wave of robots could easily displace a quarter million jobs by 1985. Without some form of local content requirements for cars sold in the U.S., job loss as a result of imports and a declining percentage of U.S. parts in cars assembled by domestic producers could reduce employment by as much as an additional 200,000 jobs.

A dual temptation.

There is a dual temptation for concessions in the auto industry: first, to give the direly depressed auto market a shot in the arm and raise employment; second, to win in return some protection against the onslaught of automation and the increasing "outsourcing," that is, purchase of parts from foreign (or nonunion) factories that are often owned by the domestic producers themselves.

The agreement in principle between GM and the UAW guaranteed that labor savings in a new contract would be passed through to consumers. It also provided for an outside auditor to check the books, a return to the original contract by the end of the agreement, some controls on outsourcing and equality of sacrifice. In a backhanded way, the UAW seemed to have won some of its earlier demands under Reuther's leadership. However, by approaching the issue in this way, the union admitted a need for concessions before getting full access to company books and also contributed to the prevailing view that labor costs are the main industry problem.

But over the long term productivity in the auto industry has outstripped labor cost increases. Recent increases in unit costs are largely the consequence of factories operating at depressed, inefficient levels. Indeed, until 1974 the cost of a new domestic car expressed in terms of months of median family income declined to a low of 4.19 months, before rising to 4.5 months in 1980. By raising prices at a record clip, the corporations, GM in particular, hoped to recoup losses resulting from the shift to small cars and from declining sales in recent years, producing the familiar "stickler shock."

When the cars didn't sell as well as some cheaper

Japanese models, they blamed the high UAW labor costs. But of the \$1,000 to \$1,500 price advantage that Japanese cars have over comparable domestics, according to a 1981 Department of Transportation study, "substantially more than half" stemmed from "process and product technology," which was described as "the greatest source of Japanese advantage."

What can be gained?

What can the union gain by giving up? Assume that it surrenders all of the paid personal holidays won in 1979 and a week's vacation, a realistic possibility. If equality of sacrifice were enforced by also driving down pay for white collar workers (many of them clerks or engineers whom the UAW would like to organize) and the already lower pay in the supplier companies (many of whom are also unorganized), that might bring a savings of around \$400 per car. If sales increase 1 percent for each 1 percent decline in price (a figure within the range economists usually figure, although high interest rates and recession fears could reduce that), then that increase in sales could bring back around 30,000 jobs. But eliminating the days off—originally proposed as a step toward the shorter work week and a way to gain job security by increasing employment—would reduce that figure by 15,000-20,000 for a net gain of 10,000 jobs.

Meanwhile, even if GM were to pass through all those labor savings to the consumer, it would also save approximately \$250 per car by spreading its fixed costs over more vehicles, thereby making an additional \$1.35 billion which it could pocket. If GM concentrated its price cuts in the more competitive small-car field, which would make the most sense, it would hurt Ford substantially and possibly finish off poor old Chrysler, which has made some of its small recovery as a result of the early concession of \$15,000 per worker over the life of the current contract.

If the union could win controls on technology, plant closings, overseas investment and work control on the shop floor, then some trade-off could be worthwhile. But concessions are likely to do little to invigorate an industry that is likely to recover anyway later this year if Reagan's policies don't produce an even deeper recession than expected. In any case, job security calls for shortening the work week, not abandoning a small start in that direction.

But as Robert Schrank, an expert in work organization, told *Business Week*, workers who make concessions or depart from traditional expectations of increases or cost-of-living protection should at the very least consider their loss as an investment in the companies. They should demand commensurate control over that corporation and its investment decisions. Access to company books, a voice in pricing decisions, and a chance to make the case for workers before corporate directors are only tantalizing hints of the kind of investment control that unions should demand in any case, but especially when they show restraint or, above all, make concessions.

The biggest problem facing unions at contract time this year, however, is their lack of political power. With a federal economic policy designed for full employment and tailored to the needs of industries and regions undergoing traumatic change, combined with public ownership in key sectors, many current auto and trucking industry problems would have diminished. Unions in those industries might have been forced to moderate monetary demands and find innovative ways to confront shifts in the U.S. economy. But their hard-won gains over many decades would not be called in to question.

IN THESE TIMES

The Independent Socialist Newspaper

Published 42 times a year: weekly except the first week of January, fourth week of March, last week of November, last week of December; bi-weekly in June, July and August by The Institute for Policy Studies, Inc., 1509 N. Milwaukee Ave., Chicago, Ill. 60622, (312) 489-4444. Institute for Policy Studies National Offices, 1901 Q Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20009.

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This issue (Vol. 6, No. 11) published February 3, 1982, for newsstand sales February 3-9, 1982.

IN THESE TIMES

New left rejects new fed

By John Judis

PRESIDENT REAGAN'S JAN. 26 State of the Union address and the filmed Democratic response that followed it caused a mixture of fear and hope among members of the American left. As learned by *In These Times* in several morning-after telephone interviews, most members of the left condemn Reagan's "new federalist" proposal for shifting responsibility of welfare and food stamps from the federal government to the states.

"He's like one of those surgeon barbers," said New York City Council member Ruth Messinger. "He's been using leeches to cure the economy, and now he goes on TV and tells people we need more leeches."

Some leftists think that the new federalism could backfire on the Republicans. "The whole thing is mean-spirited. It's a bad public policy," said Wade Rathke, the director of ACORN, a national organization of community groups. "But it's great for us. We've got to have things in places where we can deal with them, and that's not in D.C."

Inherently inequitable.

The first stage of Reagan's new federalism, embodied in the fiscal 1982 budget, shifted the responsibility for nine block grants to the states. The funds allotted for them—primarily community development programs—were cut back 25.6 percent from 1981 levels, prompting howls of protest from Democrats and Republicans alike (*In These Times*, Dec. 9).

But in his address, Reagan promised that the funds for the new stage would not be reduced. The shift of aid-to-families-with-dependent-children (AFDC) and food stamps to the states would be balanced by the shift of total responsibility for Medicare and Medicaid to the federal government. In addition, during the first phase of the shift, from 1984 to 1987, states could draw funds from a \$28 billion trust fund created from federal excise revenues. From 1987 to 1991, the trust fund would be phased out, and states would assume funding through their own taxes.

Left wing opponents of the plan object most to the effect it will have on the poor in states that have traditionally had low welfare benefits. "It will subject a national program to the tender mercies of a state like Mississippi," said Michael Harrington, the chair of the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee (DSOC).

New York's Messinger compared the Reagan proposal to the government's abandonment of Reconstruction after the Civil War. "The message to the poor is that poverty will look a little different—just like slavery looked a little different—but you are still going to be consigned to the bottom of the heap."

Jim Hightower, who is running for Texas's Agricultural Commission, described Reagan's new federalism as "some of the same old patent medicine he's been hustling since *Death Valley Days*." "It's not a matter of moving around bureaucracies, but cutting off people," Hightower said. "In Texas, 25 percent of the people are low income. The thought that the help you need is going to come from Austin [the state capital] is absurd."

Ira Katznelson, professor of political science at the University of Chicago, said that no matter which state administers them, the Reagan programs are inherently inequitable. "If the program goes

through, it will guarantee the demise of AFDC and food stamps. States are always competing for productive industry and people. It's in every place's interest to do everything to have industry move there. It is a positive disincentive if a state says it pays higher welfare benefits. You'll end up with Mississippi paying nothing, but with New York paying very little, too.

"The federal government doesn't have to play that competitive game, so it is in the best position to fund and administer the programs."

Local politics.

But some members of the left distinguished the form of the new federalism from its substance. "I don't think the problem is the decentralization of power," said Lee Webb, the director of the Conference on Alternative State and Local Policies. "It is the values that Reagan is putting into the process. While his rhetoric argues for continued services, it masks an attempt to get government out of the business of providing minimum services."

Continued on page 6

Old GOP takes charge

By John Judis

WHO OCCUPIES THE TOP posts is important to any presidential administration. But in the administration of Ronald Reagan—a man who according to former aide Lyn Nofziger heeds only the first part of the maxim "Early to bed, early to rise"—it is very important indeed.

After a year of skirmishes and pitched battles between traditional Republican conservatives, grouped around Vice-

President George Bush and Secretary of State Alexander Haig, and New Right and supply-side conservatives, the Bush-Haig forces have emerged triumphant. Social issues are on the back burner, Haig's peculiar brand of detente and Atlanticism is in and Rep. Jack Kemp's supply-side economics is holding on—though just barely.

Since he was elected, Reagan's overall policy has been coordinated by two long-time California allies, Michael Deaver and Edwin Meese, and by James Baker, who was undersecretary of commerce in the Gerald Ford administration and Ford's campaign manager in 1976 and Bush's in 1980. But Deaver has resigned, and Meese has been shunted aside in favor of Baker. *Business Week* has described Baker as a "traditional Republican" on economic issues—more concerned about deficits than tax cuts, totally unconvinced that a return to the gold standard will benefit the economy and in support of Federal Reserve Chairman Paul Volcker's tight money policies.

Baker, like other Bush allies, is also reported to have little patience with the New Right on social issues. It is significant that Meese's demotion came when, without consulting Baker, he gave back all-white Christian schools their tax exemption. Baker got Reagan to repudiate Meese's action.

Baker's elevation also coincides with the departure of White House political aide Nofziger, the New Right's main person in the White House, and the appointment of former Bush campaign aide Rich Bond as deputy director of the Republican National Committee (RNC). Conservatives who had called for the resignation of RNC chairman Richard Richards because of his attacks on New Right independent political campaigns have hardly been mollified by the appointment of Bond, who will run the RNC's daily operations. Bond was formerly an aide to Rep. William Green, the most liberal House Republican, and Senator Charles Mathias, one of the most liberal senators.

The president is the only high-level supply-sider left in the administration. Baker and Budget Director David Stockman tried to pressure Reagan into cutting defense and increasing taxes. Assistant Treasury Secretary Paul Craig Roberts, the most outspoken supply-sider, resigned last month to become an economics professor at Georgetown. The President's Gold Commission, which was seen as the last, best hope by supply-siders, returned a negative verdict last month on the gold standard. It is probably only a matter of time before Reagan himself jumps ship.

Haig's victories in the State Department and National Security Council (NSC) have been equally dramatic. The appointment of Haig's Undersecretary William P. Clark, a mediator rather than a policy maker, to replace Haig's enemy, Richard Allen, leaves Haig clearly in charge of foreign policy. Haig has appointed Kissinger-Nixon proteges Walter Stoessel and Lawrence Eagleburger as his second and third in command at the State Department. (In 1959 Stoessel was appointed a postgraduate fellow at Harvard's Center for International Affairs, where Kissinger presided, and in 1969, as ambassador to Poland, became Kissinger and Nixon's secret emissary to the Chinese.)

Haig also scored a coup by getting Clark to appoint a Haig advisor, Robert McFarlane, as the deputy national security advisor. And during the past month, Haig's influence was evident in the administration's cautious course in Poland and in the decision not to sell FX jet fighters to Taiwan.

At a Jan. 21 Washington meeting, top New Right conservatives issued a statement expressing their "deep concern about the present conduct and future prospects of the Administration." Their main concern was Reagan's appointments. "In one department after another," the statement declared, "crucial positions are occupied by people who have small history of sympathy with, or understanding of, the Reagan mandate, the principles on which it rests, or the sense of urgency that it communicates." ■

State of the Union



The message to the poor is that they will still be at the bottom of the heap.

IN SHORT

Family matters

More than 200 delegates attended last month's two-day Conference on Work and Family Life, launching a campaign designed to "take the issue of the family away from the right." The event, held at the First Unitarian Church in San Francisco, was organized by the Oakland-based Friends of Families, a national "pro-family" coalition drawn from the ranks of labor, religious groups and liberal-to-left organizations. Conferees voted to form a California project associated with Friends of Families, and also to establish a statewide "Family Day." Still in the works is a "Family Bill of Rights," a legislative answer to the right-wing Family Protection Act.

"The stress people experience in the daily work world is the primary cause of the breakdown in family life," said Michael Lerner, founder and co-chairman—with Oakland City Councilman Wilson Riles Jr.—of Friends of Families. Riles told the delegates that this approach to the family issue "could unite progressives in the black and white communities in precisely the way that people always talk about but rarely achieve." Also looking hopefully to the future was conference coordinator Laurie Zoloth, who predicted that Family Day would eventually become a "new kind of national holiday."

Protection from what?

Several groups opposing the Family Protection Act recently formed a Coalition to Stop the FPA. According to Larry Gurel of the National Gay Task Force (NGTF), a legislative committee is monitoring the status of the FPA in both its House and Senate incarnations while a public education committee is preparing a pamphlet on the issue. Along with the NGTF, the coalition's membership includes the NAACP, the National Education Association, the Women's Action Alliance, the National Organization of Lesbians and Gays, the Gay Rights National Lobby, the National Women's Law Center and many other organizations.

"It's really inconceivable that the Act will pass as is," Gurel said. "What's much more likely is that parts of it will pass, either as bills or as individual sections of bills." In its present form, the FPA would deny federal funds to individuals or groups "for the purpose of advocating, promoting or suggesting homosexuality, male or female, as a life style." The measure also opposes abortions for minors, free legal services for gays and federal protections for victims of abuse by parents or spouse. Further information on the FPA, and on the Coalition to Stop the FPA, can be obtained from the NGTF at 80 Fifth Ave., New York, NY 10011; (212) 741-5800.

Not pro-creation

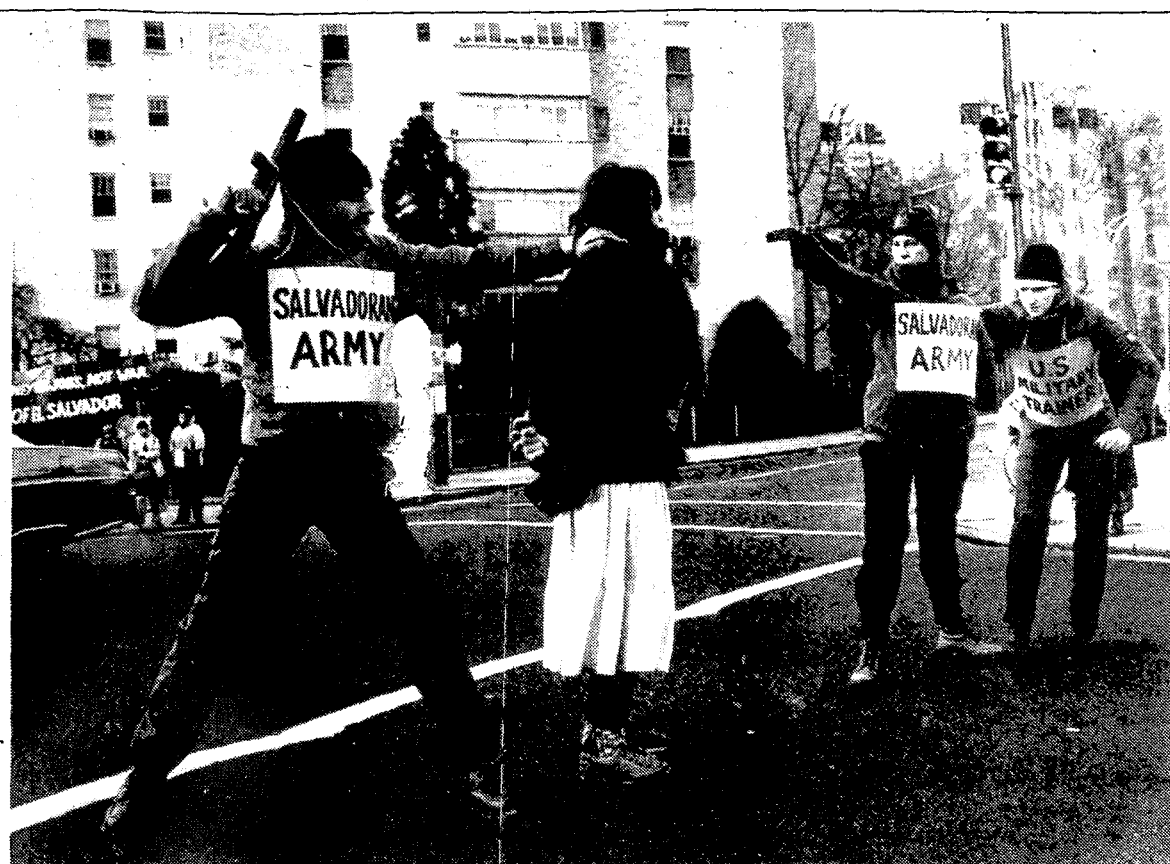
Adopting the tactics used so successfully by creationists, reports PNS, a group of scientists has formed the first national organization to defend the teaching of evolution in public schools. A leader of the group, Stanley Weinberg of the Iowa Academy of Science, says that opponents of evolution have had a free hand in spreading their message because scientists have waited 50 years to fight back against their lobbying and organizing efforts. Weinberg says the new organization—which includes parents and teachers as well as scientists—will try to counter the creationists by coordinating pro-evolution activities in individual states.

Despite the rapid growth of the new group, Weinberg predicts a long fight on the evolution front. More than 20 state legislatures are considering "creation science" laws, and each law requires a separate court challenge. One development that might quickly stop the trend, Weinberg says, would be a court decision requiring states to pick up the tab for those legal battles. "Few legislatures," he says, "will be willing to spend millions of dollars for the privilege of passing a kooky law."

Taxes, death and cheese

"No taxation without representation!" cried the Revolutionary patriots of Boston. But now that's beside the point. The New York *Daily News* (via PNS) reports that Boston's North End Veterans Council, which sponsors an annual re-enactment of Paul Revere's famous ride of that time, has been told that the city can no longer afford to pay for the April 19 celebration. The lack of funds is due to Proposition Two-and-a-half, a statewide measure cutting local property taxes. . . . In a series of commentaries prepared for publication in local newspapers, reports the *Los Angeles Times*, the Federal Emergency Management Agency is pushing the idea that the U.S. could fully recover from an all-out nuclear war within two to five years. One such column is titled "Would Survivors of Nuclear Attack Envy the Dead? Experts Say 'No.'" The piece provides helpful hints for turning a rec-room into a fallout shelter *cum* snack bar. . . . So far, reports PNS, the great surplus-food giveaway launched in December by President Reagan hasn't gone down too smoothly. For instance, when 18,000 pounds of processed American cheese was handed out at six Washington, D.C., churches last month, thousands of people who had waited hours in the cold were turned away empty-handed after the supply ran out. Let them eat quiche.

—Josh Kornbluth



Guerrilla theater in the streets of Washington, D.C., draws attention to the anti-guerrilla training of 1,600 Salvadoran military personnel in the U.S. ("In Short," Jan. 20). It was disclosed last month that a Fayetteville, N.C., television station had allowed a sheriff's deputy to pose as a news cameraman in order to videotape opponents of the training program. "I believe in live and let live," explained WKFT general manager Tom Scanlan, "but I'm also for freedom of surveillance for the police."

Rick Reinhard

It doesn't pay to be safe at non-union coal mines

On Jan. 20, seven coal miners, all of them related, died from an explosion in a small mine near Grethel, Ky. With two other deaths that week, the total for this year rose to 16. That puts the carnage ahead of the rate for last year, when 153 miners were killed (one of the highest such death counts in a decade). In the weeks just before Christmas, two disasters claimed a total of 21 lives.

Nearly two-thirds of last year's fatalities were in non-union mines. Some observers think that safety conditions are particularly bad in the numerous small, "doghole" mines that have proliferated as coal prices have risen. Big companies have been happy to buy coal for cleaning and shipping from these little mines, which often are non-union.

Though the Hamilton brothers, operators of the Grethel mine, had petitioned to be in the United Mine Workers (UMW), their cottage-industry mining operation was typical of the trend. But many of these small mines—including some where the recent disasters occurred—are owned or ultimately controlled by the biggest names in the industry.

"There are two themes that we think run through these recent disasters," says J. Davitt McAteer, an attorney and former UMW safety specialist. "One is that the philosophy of the Reagan administration has an impact on health and safety in the workplace. In the mines you see the result of that appearing immediately; in the chemical plants you see it 20 years from now. If you tell the less-than-responsible mine operators that they can cut corners, they will."

As a result of Reagan's hiring freeze, inspection personnel at the Mining Safety and Health Administration have dropped from 1,422 in October 1980 to

1,317. There are 58 fewer inspectors now than in 1978, the UMW reports, but 425 more mines. As a result, the UMW says, only 90 percent of mandated inspections are being performed, many of those inspections are less thorough than in the past and morale in the agency is abysmal. "The unofficial word goes out," McAteer says. "'Don't write 'em up unless you've got 'em dead to rights.'"

The other question raised, McAteer says, is "whether just anyone in this country who wants to can open a mine." He says that compared with European countries, which require certification and training of supervisors, it is easy—much too easy—for mines to be opened in the U.S.

There's a third theme in the latest disaster. Only Kentucky, McAteer says, still permits miners to blast loose coal without first making an undercut with a power saw—a practice called "shooting off the solid." Although the saw is expensive, especially for a "doghole" mine, the practice saves lives.

—David Moberg

Which side is PROPAC on?

Modeled on the successful New Right political action committees, the Progressive Political Action Committee (PROPAC) was one of several political action committees organized by Democrats after the 1980 election (*In These Times*, Feb. 18). But if PROPAC's first efforts are any indication, Republicans need not lose any sleep in 1982.

Last month, PROPAC, organized by former AFL-CIO staff member and Sen. Edward

Kennedy supporter Vic Kamber, ran a series of full-page advertisements in the *Sacramento* (Calif.) *Bee* attacking incumbent Republican senator S.I. Hayakawa. After quoting Hayakawa, who is up for re-election this fall, saying, "I've been working too damn hard," the ads remarked, "Californians ask: on what?" They also stated that Hayakawa had passed only one of 43 bills that he introduced in the Senate.

"We're trying to give the right wing a taste of their own medicine," Harriet Matthews, the director of PROPAC, told *In These Times*. "We've decided to come out with our guns smoking."

But Hayakawa is widely acknowledged by pollsters and veteran political observers to be the heavy underdog in the Republican Senate primary to Rep. Barry Goldwater Jr., and a far weaker Republican candidate than either Goldwater, Maureen Reagan or Rep. Peter McCloskey in the general election. The campaign staff of Gov. Jerry Brown, who is expected to get the Democratic Senate nomination, would like nothing better than to face Hayakawa in the fall.

The Brown staff has not been pleased by PROPAC's attempt, in Matthews' words, to "soften up" Hayakawa. "I would have to say that anybody who puts out an ad like this is nuts," said Lou Haas, a key Brown campaign aide. "I am totally baffled by it."

Attempts to seek clarification from Matthews proved fruitless. Asked whether their ads won't potentially hurt the Democrats in the fall by damaging the weakest Republican candidate, Matthews replied, "We've selected four senators with ultra-conservative voting records. It's impossible to decide what is going to happen in California."

But why not go after the stronger Republican candidate, Goldwater, who is way ahead in the polls? "Hayakawa is the incumbent, and we've selected senators so far," Matthews replied.

—John Judis

DRAFT

Easy targets for indictment

By John D. Fisher

MINNEAPOLIS

LAST DECEMBER SCOTT AASENG was summoned to U.S. District Court in Minneapolis to account for his "crime against the American people." It was a moment of high political drama, briefly ballyhooed by the national press. For a short time it appeared that Aaseng, a 20-year-old student at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn., who is studying peace issues and Christian pacifism, would become the first American since the Vietnam era to be indicted for failing to register for the draft.

But he was not indicted. At the last possible moment, the U.S. Department of Justice called off its prosecutor, district attorney Thor Anderson, and instructed him to wait. The reason was a pat example of government miscommunication. The Justice Department had set in motion its investigative apparatus and was preparing indictments for nonregistrants who had turned themselves in. They were young men like Aaseng who felt it was necessary to resist draft registration publicly on political, moral, religious or legal grounds.

Most of them had written letters to the Selective Service System (SSS) explain-

ing that noncompliance was both necessary and correct. Since the Justice Department had received 134 letters, which could be interpreted as signed confessions, it had begun moving toward prosecuting its first batch of draft resisters. At the time, according to government estimates, at least 800,000 had not registered since President Carter had brought back draft registration in July 1980: a 25 percent rate of failure.

Meanwhile, President Reagan had created the White House Military Manpower Task Force, a group headed by Major General Thomas K. Turnage. Turnage, a much-decorated veteran of World War II and Korea, was selected by Reagan to head the Selective Service System (SSS). Among other things, this task force was instructed to examine the issue of draft registration and make a recommendation to the President concerning the necessity and political implications of continuing the registration policy of Reagan's predecessor. Its report was supposed to be finished by last November or early December. But by the time Aaseng was summoned to District Court in the second week of December, Reagan had not yet received the task force report.

It was an embarrassing predicament for the government. Throughout his presidential campaign in 1979 and 1980, Rea-

gan repeatedly stated his opposition to a peacetime draft and even more often to Carter's policy of registration. "The word 'registration' to young people is code for 'draft,'" Reagan said in 1979, "an idea that evokes painful memories of Vietnam for many and an idea that has always seemed alien in a democratic society."

In December, the Justice Department was moving rapidly toward large-scale prosecutions of those men who had refused to register. But Reagan hadn't yet decided whether to stick with his anti-draft instincts or to allow registration—and prosecutions—to continue. Nor had

million," according to anti-draft activists. What the government appears to be hoping for is some kind of mass repentance that will save it from the expense and political awkwardness of locking up draft resisters during a time of peace.

Even anti-draft organizers concede that the government's hopes might not be entirely in vain. The Selective Service has asked for—and will probably get—an additional \$400,000 (added to the \$150,000 it already has) for its advertising campaign. The main thrust of the campaign is radio spots on stations that cater to young adults.

According to people on both sides of the registration debate, one reason men have not registered is because there has been some confusion about the legal necessity of registering. This has been due in part to Reagan's indecision regarding the registration policy and in part to the absence of indictments by the Justice Department. Until January, draft counselors could tell nonregistrants that

When the grace period expires Feb. 28, the government will have no choice but to start prosecuting the resisters.

the task force made its recommendations. So Aaseng was granted a temporary reprieve.

Reagan makes up his mind.

On Jan. 7 Reagan cleared the air. "I have decided to continue registration," he declared in a statement read by White House Counselor Edwin Meese. "Make no mistake," Reagan added, "the continuation of peacetime registration does not foreshadow a return to the draft.... However, we live in a dangerous world."

Now, though appearing to cling to his anti-draft sentiments, Reagan was justifying draft registration, insisting that "registration could save the U.S. as much as six weeks in mobilizing emergency manpower."

When Carter looked into reinstituting registration after the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in January 1980, the Selective Service was caught offguard. SSS officials initially told Carter that registration would save only seven days. And because that didn't seem like a significant amount, the White House tried to suppress the numbers. (In fact, Reagan used that estimate as fuel against Carter in his presidential campaign.) But the initial SSS estimate was soon revised upwards.

Then, after Reagan had ignored registration for about a year, the Turnage Task Force handed him a new estimate of the time that would be saved with registration—six weeks is the latest number. The task force report on which Reagan based his decision has not been publicly released; and so far neither the press nor anyone else has applied pressure to make it public.

At the Jan. 7 press conference, Meese said that men who did not register for the draft would be granted a "grace period" of 30 to 60 days to reconsider their decision. When the grace period expires, he said, the government will have no choice but to start prosecuting. On Jan. 20 the Selective Service announced that after Feb. 28 all eligible men who have failed to fulfill their obligation to register will be subject to prosecution. Since failure to register for the draft is a felony, a convicted nonregistrant can be fined up to \$10,000 and/or sentenced to up to five years in jail.

Enforcing the law.

The government has set itself up for its biggest law enforcement problem since Prohibition. Noncompliance now appears to be higher than ever before, even higher than at the peak of the Vietnam war. And in spite of statements by Meese, Turnage and other government officials that "the government is not in the business of prosecuting people," it looks like the government will have to start prosecuting soon because, in effect, the government has forced its own hand.

By the end of 1982, the number of nonregistrants should be "well over a

they probably would not get caught, or be indicted, if they chose to not register.

The government's new agenda is that if it wins the first round of prosecutions, men will decide to register rather than risk the consequences. "Obviously, the government does not want to lose these first few cases," said Dan Dobson, one of the lawyers representing Aaseng in his confrontation with the Justice Department. "Nothing would be more destructive to their case. If Aaseng is tried and convicted, it might scare people into registering. On the other hand, it might encourage a lot of silent resistance."

It is too early to tell what might happen after the initial batch of prosecutions, or even during the few weeks remaining before they begin. But if Aaseng is any indication, there may be some credence to the government's strategy. Aaseng recently indicated that he might register after all. "My overall beliefs have not changed," he said in late January. "Let's just say that I'm re-evaluating the situation."

Aaseng's case also illustrates the extent to which draft opponents have organized. When it appeared that he would become the first victim of a new wave of prosecutions, anti-draft groups in 60 cities were prepared for protests.

But the relative inactivity of the past year-and-a-half has left the anti-draft movement in a kind of "lull," according to Don Olson, a Minneapolis draft counselor and Vietnam-era resister who served 20 months in federal prison. But he said that when the Justice Department hands down its first indictment, "the anti-draft movement plans to organize demonstrations at federal buildings across the country."

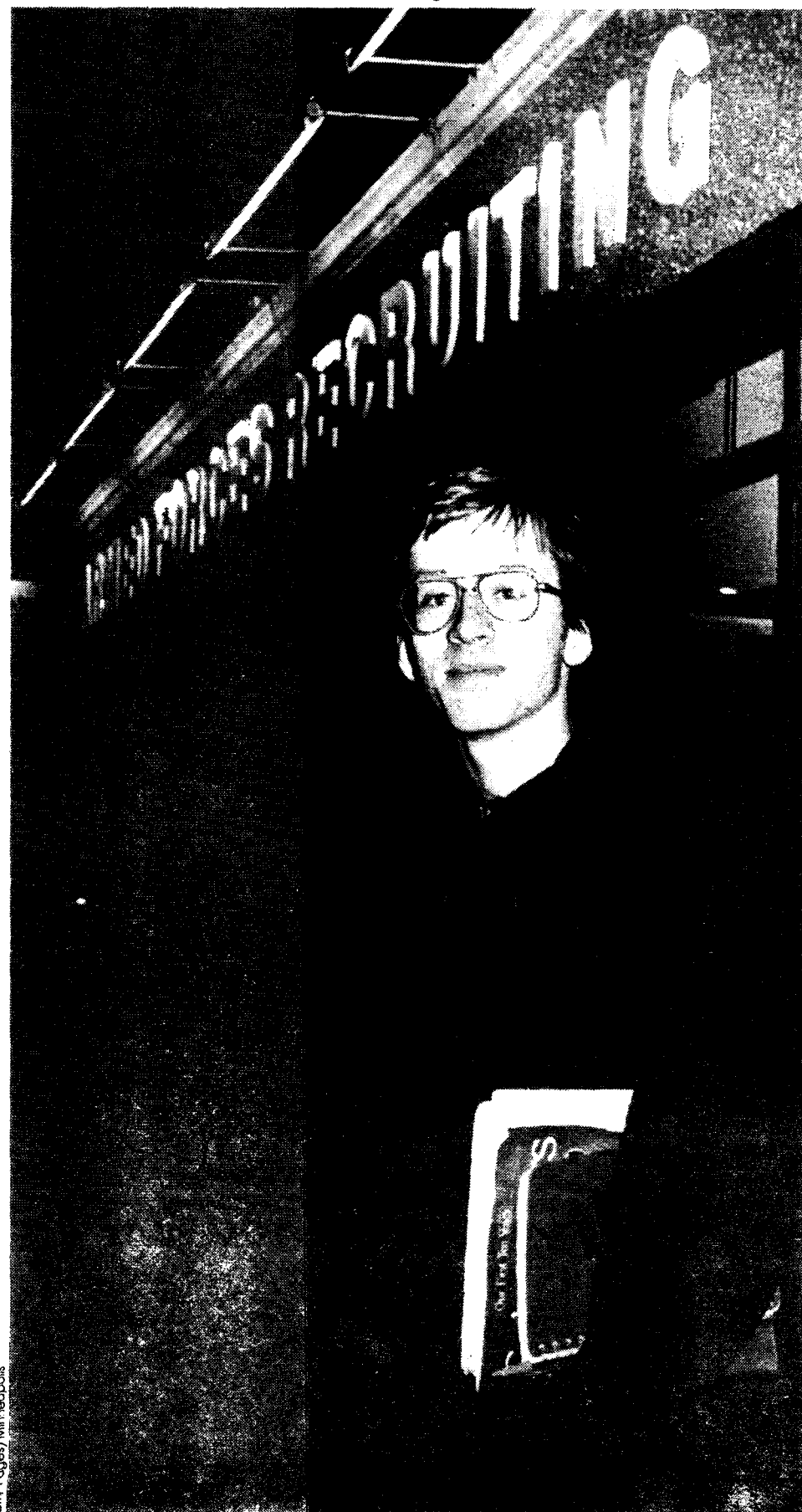
The chosen few.

The Justice Department won't even try to prosecute all of the nonregistrants. "My guess is that we'll see no more than about 20 or 30 prosecutions," said Barry W. Lynn, editor of the *Military Law Review* and president of Draft Action, a Washington-based nonprofit anti-draft organization.

It is likely that Aaseng, if he decides to continue his refusal to register, will be among the first to be indicted. It is highly probable that indictments of the other 133 men who turned themselves in will follow. Right now, they are the only nonregistrants the government can positively identify. There is no efficient way to track down any of the others. Social Security numbers and IRS files (which are the best information the government has for keeping tabs on people) are, for the time being, off limits to the Selective Service. Last year, however, the agency received permission from Congress to use Social Security numbers if the President deems it necessary for enforcement of the program.

According to Lynn, these men are easy targets for indictments because they

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City Pages/Minneapolis

Left

Continued from page 3

"But as the decentralization of power does take place—and progressive people have to realize this—it is going to make local and state government a much more varied, important place to work in."



New York City Council member Ruth Messinger compared Reagan's proposal to the government's abandonment of Reconstruction after the Civil War.

Tom Hayden, chair of the California Campaign for Economic Democracy (CED) and a California Assembly candidate, echoed these sentiments. "The programs are going to return more power and less money," Hayden said. "And that is where independent grassroots politics can come in. As cities and states become the front lines of resistance to Reaganomics, grassroots politics can have an impact."

"Because of the budget cuts, progressives will also be in a good position to build coalitions with centrist or moderate forces—city councils and mayors. Where else are they going to turn? They either have to accept the cuts or join the rebellion."

ACORN has already been leading local campaigns for ordinances to guarantee that 75 percent of community development block grants benefit low and moderate income people. But ACORN's Rathke recognizes that AFDC and food

stamp cuts will pose an even greater test. "The constituency is even more powerless than most constituencies," he said. "There will be bloody fights. We'll lose some, but we'll also win some and improve the services from what they were."

Opportunities without resources.

Members of the left who bothered to watch the filmed Democratic response to the State of the Union were not impress-

ed. Chicago political consultant Don Rose, who managed Jane Byrne's 1979 mayoral bid, said that Reagan put on a better show than the Democrats.

"Reagan's performance was excellent. He may be best since Roosevelt," Rose said. "He gets this nice guy response even from the Democrats who vote against all his programs."

"The Democrats' film was not sufficiently varied to maintain people's interest. It was fundamentally speaking to the converted. How many of these portraits do you need in order to know times are tough?"

Rose and others believed that in addition to technical problems with the Democrats' response, there is also a deeper political problem. "There's a kind of artificial optimism now," CED's Hayden said. "Six or eight months ago, a lot of people were immobilized. Today all the Democrats I know are predicting victory in '82."

"Both moods are based entirely on Reagan's performance rather than any rebuilding or restructuring of the Democratic coalition. They're forgetting that the public knows that they didn't come up with any solutions either when they were in office."

DSOC's Harrington took a similar view. "The problem is that all that the party and people like Manatt [chair of the Democratic National Committee] have is that Reagan is no good and is wrecking the economy. They're waiting for Reagan to do himself in and for power to drop into their hands like a ripe plum."

Harrington, who spends much of his time travelling around the country speaking to students and to unions, said that when he travels he often finds a tremendous receptivity to alternative programs. "The opportunities for socialists and radicals are better than they have been for 30 years."

"But our opportunities are so much greater than our resources. I just don't whether we'll be able to take advantage of them."

Draft

Continued from page 5

will probably choose to make religious, political or moral defenses, not build complicated legal ones. Many of the nonregistrants, including Aaseng, have said they would rather serve jail terms than betray their beliefs. Clearly, many of them are not interested in getting off on technicalities.

Soon Aaseng and the 133 other nonregistrants will know what is in store for them. But for everyone else, several questions remain: How many other nonregistrants will be targeted for indictments? And, will registration lead to a draft?

Despite Reagan's insistence that "the continuation of peacetime draft registration does not foreshadow a return to the draft," the following are reasons for skepticism:

- The Reagan administration has committed itself to the largest military buildup in U.S. history;

- The military services plan to add up to 500,000 soldiers to their ranks during the next five years. This projected force increase, according to an Army report to Caspar Weinberger, "will require extraordinary manpower policies to include significant augmentation to the Volunteer Concept";

- Available data indicate that the Pentagon is profoundly dissatisfied with the All Volunteer Force;

- The number of young men of prime recruitment age (17 to 21) is decreasing every year, which could make it increasingly difficult for the military service to recruit enough people to fulfill even present quotas;

- Draft boards have been selected in all 50 states; and,

- No draft registration in the history of the U.S. has ever failed to produce a draft.

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INDIA



Demonstrators stage a sit-in near Gandhi's residence in New Delhi to denounce recent government policies.

Unions protest anti-strike law

By Sanjib Baruah & Manju Parikh

CHICAGO

ON JAN. 19, A GENERAL STRIKE was called in India to oppose an omnibus anti-strike law decreed by Indira Gandhi's government. The strike was sponsored by eight national trade union federations with a combined membership of five million. The trade union federation affiliated with Prime Minister Gandhi's Congress Party, which has 2.1 million members, opposed the strike.

This was the first major confrontation between the country's trade unions and the government in eight years. In 1974, a country-wide strike by railroad workers, along with a protest movement headed by the late charismatic leader J.P. Narayan, led to 21 months of authoritarian rule. The call for the Jan. 19 nationwide strike by trade unions across the left-right ideological spectrum is unprecedented.

General strikes, however, are by no means uncommon in India. But they are usually called by political parties and are regional in scope. So it is surprising to anyone familiar with the traditions of political protest in India that the Indian term *bandh* translates into English as general strike. It is not unusual for people to treat these strikes as holidays; teenagers often turn busy thoroughfares of crowded cities into playgrounds.

But the Jan. 19 general strike—even though it was a holiday for many, as reported by the *New York Times*—is significant when examined in the context of developments that preceded it. A swing to the right in economic policies and a shift to authoritarian modes of political control have marked the last two years of Gandhi's regime.

While there still seem to be few credible alternatives to Gandhi in the national political arena, the general strike can be interpreted as rejection of Gandhi's policies, an emphatic "no" from Indian workers.

The government made a concerted effort to suppress the strike. At least 10 people were killed and hundreds were in-

jured in confrontations between strikers and the police as well as with opponents of the strike. Twenty-four thousand people—mostly local union and political activists—were arrested before the strike. Most were released the day after the strike.

In Bihar, the state government had ordered that "troublemakers" be shot on sight. Even in the face of the government repression, major newspapers and the public-sector companies were closed down across the country. In Calcutta in the state of West Bengal, where a leftist united front is in office, everyday life came to a standstill. There was widespread support for the general strike in the states of Bihar, Kerala, Tamilnadu, Maharashtra and Delhi. The railroad workers who staged the strike of 1974 and the postal workers, however, were among those who did not join in the general strike.

What prompted the action.

The general strike was called primarily to protest an anti-strike law. First initiated as an executive ordinance last June, the Essential Services Maintenance Act (ESMA) was approved in September by the Indian parliament, where the ruling Congress Party has a two-thirds majority. As defined by the act, "essential services" include railways, electricity, telephones, postal services, ports, air traffic, banks, defense establishments, oil production and hospitals. It stipulates that the government can define any other sector of the economy as an essential service.

The act defines a strike in very broad terms, including refusal to work overtime and any other conduct that may cause "cessation or retardation of work." Any person participating in—or peripherally involved with—a strike in essential services can be fined, imprisoned or both. The law also denies the normal judicial process to anyone "reasonably suspected" of involvement.

Though the strike was mainly called to protest the anti-strike law, the participating trade unions presented a charter of demands. One called for withdrawal of the National Security Act, which ser-

iously curtails civil liberties. The charter also demanded reforms such as steps toward price control and a comprehensive public distribution system of essential food items. In negotiations before the strike, however, the sponsors said they would call off the strike if the anti-strike law was repealed.

The timing of the anti-strike law surprised some observers. The Indian economy had an impressive 7 percent growth rate in 1980-81, compared to a growth rate of -4.5 percent the previous year. Also, loss of working days because of strikes has not significantly affected industrial productivity in recent years. And though the inflation rate came down last year, the cost of living index, which more accurately reflects consumer prices of essentials such as food, increased 49 points in the first 10 months—the highest increase since 1974.

The anti-strike law came on the heels of a general offensive against labor by both employers and the government. Of the 255 major industrial disputes in 1978, before Gandhi returned to power, 247 of them were called because management had not implemented existing labor laws.

In the last two years, the government unilaterally broke earlier agreements with labor in public sector firms, refusing to pay previously-agreed-to wage increases and bonuses. This prompted two major strikes, one in the Life Insurance Corporation and the other in five high-technology firms in Bangalore. In the case of the insurance workers, the government issued an executive order that nullified a Supreme Court directive that had ordered the company to pay its workers bonuses. The workers had to strike again to win back the bonuses.

The second dispute arose when the government refused to honor an earlier agreement that provided for a simultaneous increase of wages in comparable public sector enterprises. In the city of Bangalore—the heart of India's public sector electronics industry—130,000 workers staged a strike for 77 days. The government responded by announcing a lock-out which eventually forced the workers to return to work.

With major agreements in banking

and the steel, coal and oil industries due for renegotiation both this year and next, some trade unionists fear that the government might attempt to initiate a wage-freeze through the anti-strike law. The trade unions' response to the employer and government offensive has been to call for joint action, even where there are disagreements among the political parties that the unions are tied to.

Gandhi since 1980.

A respected Indian political scientist, Rajni Kothari, wrote in *Indian Express* a few weeks ago that India has undergone a major political transformation despite the appearance of "democracy as usual." Behind the "formal existence" of parliament, an independent judiciary and a free press, India has "already moved into a harsh and oppressive state structure," he wrote.

Power has become centralized around Gandhi's office, undermining existing institutions and conflicts are increasingly dealt with through non-democratic procedures. In the ruling Congress Party most major decisions are now made by Gandhi. The party under Gandhi contrasts sharply with earlier periods when there were several national leaders with independent power bases.

The non-Marxist opposition, which united to defeat Gandhi in 1977, is beginning to come back together. But because of its factionalism and lackluster performance during its short stint in power from 1977 to 1979, it is still discredited in the public eye. The two major communist parties agree on important questions. But their strength is not national. Thirty-nine of the 47 communist members of parliament were elected from three of India's 23 states.

IMF economics.

Since Gandhi's return, there has been an unmistakable swing to the right in economic policies. Perhaps the most important example of the new economics in India is the \$5 billion loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) announced late last year. It is a sign of the new political dispensation that this decision, one of enormous consequence to the Indian economy, was made with little public debate. It has been reported that President Reagan dropped his initial opposition to the loan after November's tete-a-tete with Gandhi at Cancun. The loan has since caused a big public outcry in India.

Some of the country's best-known economists have argued that IMF's conditions sacrifice India's economic sovereignty and undermine the path of planned economic development. The policy package that India has committed itself to includes export promotion and import liberalization, encouragement of foreign and private sector investments, a shift from direct to indirect taxation, limitation of subsidies on public food grain distribution and a tight monetary policy, which could include a wage-squeeze.

The prestigious publication, *Economic and Political Weekly* suggested that the timing of the anti-strike ordinance and its passage into law was dictated not by the requirements of the domestic labor situation, but by the government's eagerness to ensure that "its large loan application before the IMF receives a favorable response."

The government's response to the strike was to claim that it was "politically motivated"—an attempt by discredited opposition politicians to unite on a single plank that opposed Gandhi. In fact, the strike was exceptional because, for the first time, trade unions united and acted together—at a time when there is considerable confusion and an apparent lack of political alternatives in the national arena.

Unlike in 1975, when Gandhi proclaimed emergency rule, all sectors of the Indian left today have learned a valuable lesson: authoritarian rule in the context of capitalism hurts the working class the most, even when the regime portrays itself as friends of the poor. It is, however, too early to predict the outcome of the new alignments.

Sanjib Baruah and Manju Parikh are doctoral students in political science at the University of Chicago.

UNION

The 11-month-old strike at Sterling Radiator is "a textbook case of union busting."

Or Bust

By Robert Howard

WESTFIELD, MASS.

"I've never been so frustrated in all my 15 years—both in the shop and on the union staff," says Jerry Rocker, whose massive barrel-chest and full beard suggest a linebacker in the National Football League rather than a union official and certainly not a man who frustrates easily. "There's an old saying, 'to win a strike, you've got to get your fingers up underneath their ribs.' Hell, I've got my hand in there up to the wrist!"

What bothers Rocker and other officials in Region 9A of the United Auto Workers is what they call the "union-busting strike" at the Sterling Radiator company in Westfield, Mass., near Springfield. On March 4, the nearly 70 members of UAW Local 430 at Sterling—four-fifths of them over 40 years old, with a combined seniority of 1,327 years—walked out in what they thought would be a normal contract dispute. Nearly 11 months later, they are still walking the picket line, and a brand new, non-union workforce, consisting primarily of 19 and 20-year-olds, has taken their place inside.

In their efforts to force Sterling owner John Reed to settle the strike and give them back their jobs, the UAW workers have rallied in front of the Westfield city hall, held candlelight vigils at Reed's home, forced him off the board of a local bank and even organized an act of passive civil disobedience at the plant gates in which 91 people, Rocker among them, were arrested. A 50-minute videotape documentary about the strike has been made and a folk song recorded.

But the strike—the longest in the history of this small, industrial city of 36,000—goes on.

Sterling Radiator's strike is one example of the breakdown of the uneasy truce that has governed American labor relations since the early '50s. Official decertifications of labor unions, only the most visible sign of the union busting phenomenon, have increased 400 percent since



On Aug. 27, 91 people were arrested after blocking the entrance to Sterling Radiator.

Photograph: Alan Compagnon

1968. Most are in small shops like Sterling employing 100 people or less. And when workers strike, more and more companies are turning to strikebreakers—not just to defeat the union but to destroy it.

But the Sterling strike is important for another reason. It suggests the revival of militant union activism. For the first time in the 25-year history of their local, Sterling workers are defending the principle of unionism with a persistence that has surprised this community and even the strikers themselves. The past year has been a time of financial hardship and insecurity. But it has also been what

Rocker calls "a whole new training ground. When you get people trapped in a corner, they're going to react," he says. "I think that's what's happening in Westfield now."

A textbook case.

In the 19th century, Westfield was known as the "Whip Capital of America." Nearly 90 percent of the buggy whips sold nationwide were made there. Today one whip factory still operates in the city, but most residents work for the numerous small manufacturing businesses that grew up in the city during the expansion of the American economy in the years after World War II. Rarely employing more than a few hundred workers and almost always unionized, these

firms produce everything from gas boilers to bicycles, and from small arms ammunition to the baseboard radiators made at the Sterling plant.

The history of Sterling reads like a success story of the post-war American economy. From its modest beginnings in a Westfield garage in 1948, the company has grown from a local family business into a budding multinational known as the Reed National Corporation, with six plants in the U.S. and Canada. In 1980, Reed National sold \$30 million worth of industrial products, and company founder and principal owner, the 72-year-old Reed, made an estimated \$1 million in profits.

Sterling was a success story of post-war unionism as well. The UAW organized the shop in 1956 and, for nearly 20 years, Sterling workers won steady improvements in their union contract without a single strike. Wages at the plant rose to among the highest in the Westfield area.

Then about 10 years ago Reed started assembling a new management team—a plant manager of the old authoritarian school, an anti-union corporate lawyer and an efficiency engineer. Almost immediately working conditions changed. Workers were timed when they went to the bathroom. Foremen were forbidden to socialize with workers, even to say hello in the morning. For the first time since the shop was unionized, a time study was done, ostensibly to "cost out the product," but workers claim it was to measure individual performance.

Management also began to balk during contract negotiations. Local 430 went on strike three times between 1973 and 1980. But the disputes were over issues like wages and benefits and the strikes were never very long. "Negotiations always worked out," remembers Pete Lussier, a 25-year Sterling veteran. "We'd be on the streets for a couple of weeks and then Reed would come around."

In 1979, however, things grew worse. Management began unilaterally to violate work rules and procedures built up

over two decades at the radiator plant, forcing the union into time-consuming and costly arbitration disputes. There have been more arbitration cases at Sterling in the past two years than in the preceding 20. And when company and union representatives sat down early last year to negotiate a new three-year contract, Sterling management started a campaign that Local 420's international representative from the UAW, Jim Griffin, now realizes was a "text-book case of union busting."

Management presented the union negotiating team with 18 pages of take-back demands, starting with severe caps on wages and cost-of-living increases. The company also proposed to dismantle the job bidding system, traditionally based on seniority, leaving the plant manager with the final say over which workers could move up to better jobs. The uniform wage scale in the plant would be split in two, creating a separate track for new workers, "second class citizens," says Griffin, who would never be able to reach the same pay levels as the veterans. A new series of production standards were introduced and when the UAW negotiators agreed to the plan on the condition that an incentive system be introduced along with it, company representatives said no. There was nothing to do but strike.

At first, the strike seemed like just another ordinary labor dispute—only longer. But on June 12, management hired a whole new replacement workforce. Eventually, all but two of the original Sterling workers were informed that they had been permanently replaced. Since then, the disagreements that caused the strike in the first place have been superseded by the all-important issue of jobs. The UAW has refused any settlement that does not include rehiring all the striking Sterling workers.

Meanwhile, Reed has publicly announced his commitment to retaining all the strikebreakers now working at the plant. At the last negotiating session between company and union in November, the thirty-third since last January, company representatives said they would take back no more than 12 of the unionized workers. And after March 4, the anniversary of the Sterling strike, the strikebreakers will be able to petition the National Labor Relations Board for a decertification election in which the striking Sterling workers will be excluded from participating.

Incomprehension.

Clement Laterreur was 19 years old when he started working at Sterling Radiator in August 1963. He has been a punch-press operator at the plant ever since. Three months after he began his job, Laterreur married. Today he lives with his wife Carol and their four daughters in the woods of Becket, Mass., about an hour's drive from the Sterling plant. For more than 10 years, they have been building their house step by step.

The Laterreurs had hoped to add a large den and living room last year. "But the strike has just about ate up all the money I saved," says Laterreur. From last March until November, the family's only income was the \$65 that the UAW strike fund provided each week. They have lived off their savings and a few loans. Recently, Laterreur and other Sterling workers were awarded unemployment compensation from the state. It has boosted his weekly salary to \$150. However, much of this money has already gone to replenishing the union strike fund and repaying his debts. The company, which contested his application for unemployment, has now filed an appeal.

But to Laterreur the financial costs of the strike are not the most important ones. The experience of the past 11 months has shaken a fundamental set of assumptions about his work and his life—expectations that, much like his house in Becket, he has patiently constructed over the years. "See, you're building up everything, and then, all of a sudden,

this happens just like that. We build this company up from nothing, and now those scabs are going in there and taking away our jobs," he says.

Most of the strikers share Laterreur's feeling of a sudden, abrupt change in their lives. They describe their experience of the past year with a kind of lingering incomprehension. It has been "unbelievable," says one; "unreal," says another. Often this incomprehension focuses on Reed. Many of the strikers speculate that he may no longer control his company, that Reed is being "buffaloed," as one union official put it, by his aggressive anti-union managers.

As the strike has dragged on, Sterling workers have found themselves locked in an on-going contest with Reed to win community support. In the process, they have created a new series of bonds to replace those with the company that were severed by the strike.

At first, the Westfield community divided over the strike in thoroughly predictable ways. The local daily newspaper, the *Westfield Evening News*, accused Local 430 members of "terrorist tactics." The federal court in Springfield issued a restraining order forbidding them from obstructing the strikebreakers' entry into the plant. Westfield police arrested them, made disparaging remarks about them to the press and even took off-duty jobs as private security guards at Sterling where, for \$11 an hour, they patrol the plant grounds in their city police uniforms.

At the same time, local unionists have come to the strikers' aid. Unions affiliated with the Springfield area Central Labor Council have sent people to the picket line, provided Thanksgiving turkeys and donated money for food and gifts at Christmas. In November, Local 430 and other unions in Westfield campaigned for a pro-union mayor, who has since publicly supported the strike.

But the key to winning the contest for community support is to reach the vast majority of Westfield citizens who have not expressed an opinion about the strike in any organized way. Here, the

strike is how to win community support," explains Rick Fantasia, a graduate student in sociology at U. Mass. who has studied the union-busting phenomenon and helped found the labor/community support network. "The company is going to try to create the image of strikers as isolated from the community, that unions are some kind of outside force. But if you can make the union busting itself the issue, then you can turn it around. Union busting is defeated by a total community effort—families, neighbors, shopkeepers, churches...everybody."

Starting in July, network participants helped distribute leaflets about the strike at Westfield's Fourth of July picnic and organized a mass rally of 500 people—the largest the city has ever seen—in downtown Westfield. They have passed out anti-scab flyers in strikebreakers' neighborhoods and orchestrated a campaign among area unions that forced Reed off the board of the Westfield Savings Bank. With the aid of a local folk singer (who has written and recorded a song about the strike), they have even established an "entertainment committee." One day, committee members followed Reed and other Sterling executives to a packed Westfield restaurant where they pointed out "millionaire John Reed who is throwing Westfield workers out of work" to the lunchtime crowd and sang a pro-labor song before being ushered out.

But the climax of the contest for community support occurred at the gates of the Sterling plant early on Aug. 27. To dramatize the fact that the major issue in the strike had become the workers' jobs, the UAW organized a "No Work Day"—an act of passive civil disobedience designed to block the strikebreakers' entry into the plant as long as possible. Because of the court order against Local 430, its members could not participate. So at 6:00 a.m. about 200 people gath-

Because the strike drags on, the Laterreur family's savings have dwindled.

Photograph: Lionel Delevingne



role played by a community and student coalition from the nearby college town of Amherst has been increasingly important.

Community effort.

The Western Mass Labor/Community Support Network grew out of a successful fight against union busting. In September 1980, workers at the Amherst Nursing Home went on strike to protest the tactics of an anti-union law firm hired by management. Student organizations from the University of Massachusetts and Amherst College got involved in the conflict. The support they generated helped to turn the tide in favor of the strikers.

"The key issue in any union-busting

ered across the street from the plant—UAW staff members from Region 9A; workers from UAW locals as far away as the GM assembly plant in Framingham; Machinists, Paperworkers, and other union members from Westfield; Western Mass Labor/Community Support Network members. They walked the picket line under the watchful eyes of Sterling strikers and nervous Westfield police. As the busful of strikebreakers approached, they blocked the path into the plant. As the police began to move in, the marchers sat down between the bus and the plant gates. Three hours and 91 arrests later, the bus got through.

Since August, the publicity campaign against Sterling has moved to another stage. The AFL-CIO has declared a national boycott against the company's

products, and the UAW is distributing a video documentary about the strike, financed by the union and made by local filmmakers. This month the union and its supporters will canvass Westfield asking residents to sign a "People's Petition." It urges the city council to pass two ordinances—one forbidding the hiring of strikebreakers during a labor dispute, the other preventing off-duty city policemen from accepting part-time jobs at firms where workers are on strike.

The other side.

In early November, after the documentary about the strike was completed, UAW Region 9A director Ted Barnett, who organized the Sterling plant in 1956, and assistant director Rocker invited Reed to union headquarters in Farmington, Conn., for a private screening. Afterward, they explained how they planned to use the film in a national campaign against him. They told Reed they wanted to give him an opportunity to settle the labor conflict and avoid all the bad publicity. Reed said he would consider it. Two weeks later, he told Barrett by telephone to "do what you have to do."

What is it going to take to end the Sterling strike? Officially, union leaders are confident. "Reed is running scared," says Rocker. He claims the scrap material coming out of the plant has increased five-fold since the strike, the company's unemployment insurance premiums are skyrocketing and the AFL-CIO boycott is bound to hurt. And except for a small core of 15 to 20 strikebreakers, there has been a consistently high turnover in the company's non-union workforce.

Reed tells a different story. In one of the few interviews he has given since the beginning of the strike, Reed told *In These Times* that the strike was not hurting his business. And, he said, "as long as [union leaders] insist on everyone being hired back," no agreement is possible. Asked about union-busting, Reed said, "They walked out—we didn't lock them out. They busted themselves. For us, it was a matter of survival. Either we hired new people or we would have gone out of business."

Reed says that most city residents think the workers were "foolish to go on strike," and the proof is that there has been no "big groundswell of support." Union officials respond that the support is there but it is latent, difficult to focus and to organize. A major problem has been that, for all the innovative tactics ventured in the strike—last summer's rally, the bank campaign, the No Work Day, and now the video campaign and People's Petition—the events have not been coordinated, and momentum has been dissipated.

As a result, they have not pressured Reed back to the bargaining table. "It's a question of tempo," says Fantasia. "What we've been doing is hitting him, but then letting him breathe."

But if Reed has not wavered, neither have the 68 men who will soon be completing their first year on strike. Despite the frustrations of the past 11 months, their commitment to this strike has only grown stronger—because they have little choice, and because they have come to realize that their union is the one thing Reed cannot take away from them.

Some of them have begun to feel part of something bigger than their union local or even their conflict with Sterling Radiator. Pete Lussier tells of watching a roomful of union officials at a UAW leadership conference react to the documentary about the Sterling strike. He was moved by their emotion and their anger, and was a little surprised. "I never thought all this meant so much," says Lussier. "John Reed is not going to walk away from this one."

Will the strike at Sterling Radiator end up a union-busting or a union-building strike? Either way, the workers' fight is as important to the future of the labor movement as the support of the labor movement is to the future of their strike. ■

LETTERS

IN THESE TIMES is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

RESPONSIBILITY

I AM A SYMPATHETIC SUBSCRIBER WHO has been waiting for an improvement in your coverage of Central America. I must say, both the quality and quantity have been pathetic for a left newspaper. When you do touch on the issue of El Salvador, you allow leads from your stories to describe the junta's war against the people as "random violence." In the same issue (*ITT*, Jan. 13) I was surprised to find an opinion piece on the subject of Nicaragua, since you have not run a news story for months.

Given this decision to ignore the facts about the Nicaraguan revolutionary process, I was surprised to find your Dialog column, entitled "Facing the 'vanguard' trap." It could have appeared in *Commentary*. Author Irving Weinstein of DSOC apparently has read little beyond what Haig and Kirkpatrick say about Nicaragua. What else can explain the ease with which he tried to cram the quite original Nicaraguan experience into the tired, sectarian categories of the McCarthy era? The experience of Soviet authoritarianism has many lessons for those trying to construct democratic and liberating societies, and Weinstein is arrogant to the point of racism if he thinks that the Nicaraguans are unaware of them. He assumes the "unhappy and difficult responsibility [of] telling the Sandinistas that their conception of a 'vanguard' role is almost certain to lead them into a Stalinist-type dictatorship."

I spent five months in Nicaragua in 1980, helping in the ongoing national reconstruction, and I saw a mass popular movement truly participating in the creation of a new society. The process

is open, and the main authoritarian danger is the U.S. government-supported counter-revolutionary movement based in Miami and Honduras. Saul Landau of the Institute for Policy Studies recently revealed that the CIA has begun a major covert destabilization effort, corroborating a *Boston Globe* story by William Beecher. Weinstein's idea of the main danger to Nicaraguan democracy is warped, particularly in view of the Socialist International's unswerving support for the FSLN. One saw no mention of Mitterrand's recent arms sales, nor the Spanish socialist Felipe Gonzales' leadership of the SI's international Sandinista Defense Committee, named as a tribute to one of the burgeoning new organs of grassroots democracy.

—Jonathan Fox
Brookline, Mass.

A WORD TO THE WISE

BEFORE READING ANOTHER POSSIBLY Bundefined word in this week's *In These Times*, let us voice our disgust at your changing Luebbe and Schewel's "progressives" into "leftists"; even more, we are irritated at your arrogant defense of the change as freeing the pieces of "left jargon" (*ITT*, Jan. 13). Leaving aside the obvious question of whether "progressive" and "left" are, in 1982, synonymous (which they are not), and given that words, like the times, change, we strenuously urge that we leave their evolution to popular usage, not to *ITT*'s editor. Do you also make a policy of changing "conservative" to "reactionary" and "reform" to "revolution" to make articles less "bland"? And anyway, aside from

knowing one when you see one, do you have a patented definition of "left," a term, if ever there was one, which reflects its context? Let's apply the same rules of clarity to ourselves as to others.

A final point: in the movie *Reds*, John Reed is disillusioned and enraged when Zinoviev translates his "Class War" into "Holy War," on the grounds that it was what the people wanted to hear. You don't even make that excuse for your distortion of reporters' language and, quite possibly, meaning.

—Lori Ginzberg
—Joel Steiker
New Haven

Editor's note: Two points. 1) Editors are in the business of changing their writers' words, sometimes even sentences and whole paragraphs. They do so to achieve consistency of style and coherence of meaning.

2) Words do change and their evolution is a good thing. But there is such a thing as jargon (a special vocabulary fashionable with a group or clique), especially among leftists. The periodic appearance and disappearance of the word progressive is a case in point. In the '40s and '50s it was used by leftists to mean anti-Cold War liberals or Communist fellow travelers. Having disappeared, especially from the vocabulary of leftists, for some 15 to 20 years, progressive came back into style when Jimmy Carter put the finishing touches on the word liberal. Then many socialists and left liberals wanted an inoffensive term to call themselves.

The main problem with this from our point of view is not that it is somewhat disingenuous, but that it has no meaning, or a confusing range of meanings, to the general public—that it is not "popular usage." The New York Times (Nov. 27), for example, defines "progressives" as people who fuse "fiscal conservatism with a traditional liberal stance on social issues." This is hardly the way the word is used by most people on the left.

But we do recognize that there is a practical problem, both for left liberals and socialists (who for 40 years have been putting off the day when they can say who they are in public). Many of these people now call themselves pro-

gressives. When they do we will identify them as such, but when we characterize them ourselves, we will use the word left as a general description, or liberal or socialist, if either applies.

ON CONTRADICTION

YOUR SECOND GUSHING ARTICLE ON the Catholic Church and/or the Catholic left within the past six months has also ignored some of the important contradictions of the organized Catholic presence in American politics. Some segments of the church are working for peace and social change. However, on questions of feminism and gay rights, the church is one of the most powerful agents against change. This contradiction is illustrated by a recent statement by the National Council of Catholic Bishops that named anti-militarist, pro-social service and anti-abortion work as a single political program.

The Catholic church has played a key financial and organizational role in the backlash against feminism, particularly in its fight against legalized abortion. In its efforts to restrict legal abortion, the anti-choice movement, most of whose initial organization and funding came from the Catholic church, has defeated liberals (mostly Democrats) all across the country. Typically Democratic working class Catholic voters have been lured into voting for reactionary Republicans against their own interests by anti-abortionism. The anti-choice movement has provided a "Trojan Horse" for other right-wing goals, such as restricting health care for the poor.

If *ITT* paid consistent attention to feminist issues (though the past year has seen some improvement) rather than relegating feminism to guest columns, a full discussion of the contradictions of the Catholic church's complex role in American politics could begin. For more information on the Catholic role in the formation of the "Right-to-Life" movement and how this movement fostered the current wave of right-wing reaction, I recommend "Anti-Abortion, Anti-Feminism and the Rise of the New Right" by Rosalind Pollack Petchesky in *Feminist Studies*, Summer 1981 (V.7, #2).

—Carol Dorf
Oakland, Calif.

DIALOG

The danger of ideology over politics

By John Judis

BOTH MICHAEL LERNER and Betty Friedan deserve better than they have been receiving in our pages. Kate Ellis' recent attack on both ("Can the left defend a fantasized family?" *In These Times*, Dec. 9, 1981) employs a suspect psychology against Lerner and a historical misreading against Friedan.

According to Ellis, Friedan is wrong in asserting that the equal rights amendment (ERA) has "nothing to do with sexual behavior," but a cursory inspection of the ERA will reveal that Ellis and not Friedan is mistaken. Ellis confirms what Friedan charges—that by unjustifiably identifying the ERA with questions of sexual behavior, feminists helped scare off many women who might have supported the ERA on its merits, but who became alarmed over what they believed were anti-family implications of the amendment.

If the ERA is worth ratifying in itself, separate from whatever political ramifications its supporters adorn it with, then Friedan is right. Pro-ERA feminists like Ellis made a mistake in linking the ERA to other issues. Whether this mistake could have been avoided is another question.

Ellis' discussion of Lerner and his Friends of Families is difficult to follow,

because of her uncritical use of Dorothy Dinnerstein's highly speculative *The Mermaid and the Minotaur*. But I'll summarize what I believe to be Ellis' argument: according to Ellis, Lerner contends that the family is an ideal, even for the familyless, and that the left should defend this ideal. But using Dinnerstein, Ellis argues that the ideal of the family really is a desire to return to one's infantile mother. Since such a return is impossible, it is misleading to encourage people to pursue this ideal.

First, this argument is bad pop psychology. Even supposing that the family by way of Dinnerstein and Melanie Klein could be reduced to its female parent by elevating an infant's dawning days to a position of psychological pre-eminence, it would not follow that a present desire for a family could be reduced to a past one. As Freud stressed (and Ellis through Dinnerstein seems to respect his authority), wishes and dreams are complex products of past and present that cannot be reduced to their infantile component. They are overdetermined. To do so is to belittle the wish or ideal; to make the wisher seem infantile or even nutty; and this is precisely the thrust of what Ellis has to say about those millions of Americans ("middle America") who still hold the family in esteem.

Second, as Ellis acknowledges, the family is an institution, like a school system or government, that plays a role for

better or worse in our society. Its two most important roles are providing a home and security for its members, including initial education for infants and children and providing a protected space for love and sex. Far be it from me to argue that it does or could perform these functions flawlessly. But the family is the primary and best institution within our present society for performing these functions and therefore ought to be defended. Defended against what? Against the ebb and flow of the economic cycle, for one thing.

Ellis completely misunderstands Lerner on this point. She accuses Lerner of defending the ideal of the family, and argues, "The fact that most people behave as Lerner describes in the face of this loss [of the ideal] is reason enough, for him, not to question their responses." Lerner, however, is not defending an ideal but an institution that serves important social functions. Moreover, people's responses to the failure to achieve their own familial ideals are widely varied, from suicide to anti-gay vendettas. Lerner's program is designed to direct people's frustrations over the difficulty of maintaining their families toward socially constructive goals like full employment legislation and child care programs and away from vendettas against gay bars and abortion clinics.

As Ellis' argument makes clear, the left is often its own worst enemy on these

issues. Of course, no feminist or new left anarchist will say anymore (though they used to) that the family should be "smashed." But they will use, as Ellis does, pop psychology to denigrate the concerns of most Americans about having a stable family. Or they will argue that compared to other social arrangements, the family is either backward or unworthy of concern. This latter argument is sometimes made by partisans of gay liberation—as distinguished from supporters of gay rights. Greg Calvert (*ITT*, Sept. 30) uses it as a weapon against Lerner's Friends of Families. And it must also be faced head on.

In my opinion, society's approach to homosexuality should be civil libertarian: whatever consenting adults do is their business. It should be illegal to discriminate against individuals because of their sexual preferences. But society does not have the same responsibility towards homosexuality—whether as sexual behavior or as living arrangement—that it has toward the child-bearing family. As long as the family is the main institution for perpetuating our society, its members require special concern, as demonstrated minimally in such measures as tax write-offs for dependents. In this sense, society must do what it can to defend and preserve the family. And the role of the left is to seek out the most positive ways to do this.

One reason why Lerner's Friends of Families has drawn so much flak from Ellis, Calvert and others is that it is one of the few live issues in an otherwise somnolent left. Lerner's program therefore appears both to him and to his detractors as a be-all-and-end-all for the left's problems. It is not, but it is also not something that should be shunned like a deadly mushroom. Unfortunately, that is exactly the treatment it has gotten.

SCHOOLING

By Norm Fruchter

Segregation drains Chicago's schools

FOR SEVERAL DECADES, many of Chicago's schools have been victimized by limited resources, chronic disorder (including cycles of gang control in several high schools), high drop-out rates and debilitating cynicism that serves as a defense for many teachers attempting to cope with unmanageable classroom and school conditions. Test score results indicate that Chicago's performance in Reading and Math falls considerably below national norms, a serious gap that widens with age. In spite of some gradual improvement in scores since 1975, Chicago's results are distressing when compared to New York's, in which half the students are reading at or above grade level.

Chicago's schools are also suffering from years of fiscal neglect, currently compounded by the cutbacks enforced by the Chicago School Finance Authority. The vastly increased costs required to maintain a segregated, dual school system, combined with the salary drain of a swollen, patronage-ridden administration, forced Chicago schools into a cycle of deficit financing. A combination of tax forgiveness programs for Chicago corporations—failure to collect billions in corporate personal property taxes, low corporate tax assessments and tax breaks for new commercial construction—increased the system's reliance on school district bonds. When the banks refused to buy any more bonds, the stage was set for a corporate finance takeover of the school system, replicating the pattern of the financial establishment's consolidation of power in New York City.

The Chicago School Finance Authority has reduced real school expenditure by 20 percent since 1979, laying off 10,000 teachers' aides, assistant principals and career service personnel. Remaining Chicago Teachers Union members have maintained salary scales at or above national big-city averages. But school staffing patterns, especially at administrative levels, are approaching disaster, as principals struggle to control Chicago's schools with part-time assistant principals and skeletal clerical staff. Meanwhile, the Board's central office and district administrative cadre has expanded.

The gap between the few "good" schools, usually in white or gentrifying areas, and the many poorly performing black and Hispanic schools, is ominous. In District 3 in Chicago's increasingly fashionable near north side/Lincoln Park area, Superintendent Margaret Harrington has established an impressive number of magnet schools, which have integrated some formerly segregated schools and helped boost district test score performance. Yet Schiller School, near the Cabrini-Green Housing Project (into which Mayor Byrne briefly moved to demonstrate that the project was habitable), is a District 3 school targeted by the Board as one of the city's 45 most racially isolated, poorly performing schools.

The consent decree between the Justice Department and the Chicago Board of Education (ITT, Jan. 27) committed the Board to "create the greatest practicable number of stably desegregated schools." But desegregation attempts have been limited mostly to voluntary efforts through permissive transfers, special program options and magnet schools. (Magnets are schools with extra resources that offer specialized or advanced curriculum options in areas like math and science, languages or the arts.)

Chicago has developed several fine magnet schools, especially in District 3, but nationwide experience since *Brown v. Board of Education* demonstrates that magnets make little contribution to desegregation. Black students are rarely offered opportunities to fill the places of white students who leave their neighborhood schools to take advantage of magnet programs. Chicago's citywide policy

Maintaining a dual school system, and a swollen, patronage-ridden administration has created a cycle of deficit financing.

sets entrance criteria for admission to magnet schools, and allows no residual residency rights. Therefore black children displaced by the conversion of their segregated neighborhood school into an integrated magnet school are reassigned to another segregated neighborhood school. Since magnet school principals can select their teaching staff—teachers in neighborhood schools are assigned by the Central Board—teaching resources are "creamed" by magnet schools. Additional resources for magnet schools mean diminished resources for neighborhood schools.

Many observers fear the development of what Carole Mosely Braun, State Assemblywoman from the 24th district on Chicago's South Side, calls "a three-tiered school system: private, quasi-private and public. The quasi-private schools are really public schools that get special funding, lower class size, forgiveness for entrance requirements and other benefits achieved through community

pressure from their constituents."

The consent decree also committed the Chicago Board to implement a system-wide improvement program in all schools remaining segregated. Yet only \$25 million in reallocated state Title I funds and federal desegregation funds was made available to more than 300 schools. The 45 schools targeted by the board for an intensive improvement effort were granted only \$75,000-\$100,000 each—barely enough to add three to five teachers. Principals were asked to conduct needs assessments and design their own improvement programs, according to general Board guidelines that stressed time-on-task and other variables identified by effective schools research as characterizing successful schools. This encouragement of building-level decision-making is admirable in a system as centralized and fiscally conservative as Chicago's. But the limited funds and the lack of a clear improvement strategy will frustrate the consent decree's commitment to improve "achievement in all schools, with particular emphasis on those schools with the greatest needs and attended by children who have been the most disadvantaged."

Continuous confusion.

Curriculum problems have also disadvantaged Chicago's schoolchildren. For the past two decades the system has been trying to implement the Continuous Progress/Mastery Learning reading curriculum (CP/ML), developed by Michael Katims of the University of Chicago. Criticism of CP/ML from students, parents, teachers and administrators has been overwhelming. As Paula Baron, steering committee member of the Alliance for Better Chicago Schools, observed, "Continuous Pro-

gress was the most unpopular program I've ever seen in 20 years of teaching." CP/ML organized children into age cycles rather than grades, saddled teachers with time-consuming record-keeping, and confused everyone about levels of student performance and achievement. Students were consistently defined as making progress at their own rates, while actually falling hopelessly behind national norms.

As Benjamin Bloom, the University of Chicago professor who developed Mastery Learning, observed to George Schmidt, one of the founders of Substitutes United for Better Schools, "Continuous Progress/Mastery Learning is characterized by little continuous progress and no mastery learning."

Ruth Love, the new General Superintendent of Chicago's schools, abolished Continuous Progress and replaced the Mastery Learning curriculum with a new system, Chicago Mastery Learning Reading (CMLR), also developed by Katims. Many teachers say that the new CMLR program, which costs Chicago approximately \$1.5 million per year, requires much less paperwork. But questions are increasingly raised about the organization, content, design and social values of the CMLR. The new program was not comprehensively field-tested in Chicago schools, and the school system has been unable to demonstrate why CMLR was chosen over established reading systems whose publishers can demonstrate results validated through nationwide research.

The CMLR was so hastily imposed that many teachers received their few hours of training to use the program weeks after last fall's term started. Parent Equalizers of Chicago, an education-improvement group using intensive parent training combined with direct action techniques, have consistently attacked what they characterize as the racism, anti-family values and general shoddiness of the CMLR. "The CMLR's just another rip-off of our children's rights to a decent education," according to Dorothy Tillman, Parent Equalizers' founder and an SCLC veteran. "We sued the Board to get rid of the old Continuous Progress program, and this one's got to go too."

Other failures persist. The city's bilingual program suffers from inadequate resources, poor program design, competing curriculum models, haphazard administration and a systematic lack of guidelines, standardization and effective monitoring. Classification and assignment of children to Educably Mentally Handicapped classes continues under the assessment measures condemned as biased by the consent decree. The extent of within-school segregation, accomplished through tracking and other devices, has not been effectively reduced. A new Student Discipline Code imposed on students and parents seems to violate constitutional rights. Parent participation, though formally guaranteed through school and district councils, is ineffective throughout most of the system.

There are some positives in the Chicago Board's performance. The abolition of Continuous Progress allowed a return to grade-level standardized testing and clearer report cards. A compulsory report card pick-up enormously increased attendance at Parent-Teacher conferences. A new comprehensive curriculum guide allows parents to monitor their children's educational progress. A pre-second grade holdover class for children experiencing difficulty in first grade should allow effective academic intervention without the stigma that denial of promotion in the later grades often brings. Monitoring of student achievement throughout the city has been intensified. Dr. Alice Blair, the Deputy Superintendent for Instruction responsible for many of these improvements, expects "a year or two gain in Mastery Learning" as a result.

There are also the system's "star" schools, like Beasley Academy, a model elementary school stressing basic academic preparation, located across the street from the Robert Taylor homes,

Continued on page 12



Steve Cogan

STEVE MAX

Why business is two-timing Reagan

By Steve Max



1981 DREW TO A CLOSE, the Reagan economic program was dealt two serious blows. The Stockman revelation that OMB computers had been reprogrammed to produce spurious budget figures concealing an unacceptable federal deficit further undermined public confidence in the administration and increased political schizophrenia on Wall Street. The second blow, less well publicized but far worse, was the announced merger of U.S. Steel and Marathon Oil.

Next to auto, no other American industry is displayed as often as steel to provide an example of sick and impoverished corporations crying out for a touch of that soothing hand of supply side economics. Here the ramshackle pre-war plants openly show their obsolescence. Here the out-moded technology is losing markets to foreign imports. Here the absence of cash prevents investment in modern equipment, and here, we are told, the greedy steelworkers suck out the last bit of profitability before blowing their wages at the track.

It is for Steel that a million people have been dropped from food stamps. It is for steel that 200,000 mothers and infants have been cut from the special nutrition program. It is for steel, above all others, that Congress passed the \$165 billion in depreciation allowance tax cuts. Now what has Steel gone and done? U.S. Steel has announced that not only does it have an extra \$6.5 billion bucks tucked away, but that instead of using it to modernize, it will buy an oil company. Of course, there will be modest investment in modernization as well, but the Marathon Oil deal, along with diversification moves by Armco and National Steel, have caused *Business Week* to ask, "Is big steel abandoning steel?"

Reagan's problem is that steel is typical of American industry as a whole. Companies that received generous tax breaks on the theory that they would modernize are instead engaged in an orgy of high profit paper shuffling, pro-



ducing neither products nor jobs. Of course it all stands to reason. Why would a company want to modernize production when less than 80 percent of industrial capacity is in use now, and the recession has caused gluts of just about everything?

During 1981, the supposedly broke corporations spent about \$82.6 billion on mergers instead of modernization, compared with \$44.3 billion in 1980. While mergers are probably the biggest wasters of cash that should be going to further trade and jobs, mergers hardly exhaust the inventiveness of companies determined not to do anything useful with their government subsidies.

While the Reaganites decry the cheats who peddle food stamps on the street, they have made it easier for companies to peddle their unused tax breaks on the

street. Companies that don't owe the government enough to use up their new tax breaks, either because of low profits or because their taxes have already been excused under other forms of corporate welfare, can now sell their tax breaks for cash under novel provisions of Congress. The arrangements are complicated but legal. In the end, a poorer company, which the tax break was designed to help modernize, has sold the tax credit to a richer company at a fraction of its value. The loss to the federal treasury is the same, however, and the purchased tax break ends up subsidizing more cash profits instead of new technology.

Another corporate scam to take advantage of Reagan's generosity while leaving the economy in worse shape is the use of a company's cash to buy back millions of dollars worth of its own stock. One example is W.R. Grace, Inc., which has just spent \$100 million on its own stock. The advantage, says the spokesperson of this conglomerate, is that by investing in its own stock the company earns a higher rate of return than it would if it invested in its own productive operations. Perhaps its executives should be urged to try a similar policy of taking in each other's wash in lieu of salary.

In transportation there is great wailing over the plight of our ancient and undercapitalized railroads. They have made us the laughing stock of Europe, where express trains speed in excess of 100 MPH. To help the poor railroads, Reagan generously granted them a special \$311 million tax cut in addition to the regular tax cuts. Now the Illinois Central Gulf Railroad has announced that it has sold \$28 million of its tax credits and that its parent corporation, I.C. Industries, is buying \$108 million worth of its own stock.

With the highest unemployment rates in 40 years, Reagan's best hope for avoiding depression-scale job loss lies with the traditional job-producing small business

and service sectors, but here too there is serious trouble. Dun and Bradstreet reports that there are currently 326 bankruptcies a week, up 42 percent from last year.

The picture that emerges at the new year is one of corporate wheel-spinning at the top and bankruptcy at the bottom. It raises a point for speculation: Is business killing the proverbial goose, in this case Reagan? Surely someone is bound to notice that corporate America is on vacation, and someone is bound to ask what we are really getting by distributing income to the already rich. While the damage caused by the grosser aspects of deregulation will last for many years, Congress is already restive about the federal deficit and wants to raise taxes. With increased pressure from the districts it could move to take back some of the giveaways to big business.

In any event, Reagan's economic goose is about to be cooked, but who among his friends in the corporate world can stop the slaughter? Is there one executive anywhere who can say, "In this company, at least, tax breaks will be used for the purpose Congress intended. Jobs will be increased instead of automation. The sale of tax credits is pernicious." Clearly, such an executive would be fired on the spot—and then sent to a rest home.

"They" can't change the policy undermining the economy, because there is no policy. In fact, when it comes to making industrywide decisions that require planning, there is no "they." There are only individual corporations that know only one law, *maximize quarterly profits no matter what*. The final irony may be that Reagan's worst enemy is big business itself.

Steve Max is on the staff of the Midwest Academy and is co-chair of West Side Citizen Action, a chapter of the NYPIRG Citizens Alliance.

Schools

Continued from page 11

possibly the world's largest public housing project. Magnet schools like Newberry, LeMoyné and Lincoln Park, and accelerated high schools like Kenwood Academy, Whitney Young and Lincoln Park High, serve their students well. Chicago's teachers, almost half of whom are black or Hispanic, have been largely desegregated since 1977, when Chicago was threatened with a Justice Department faculty desegregation suit. An increasing number of principals and administrators are black (but not Hispanic), and some of them are

beginning to turn their schools around. As the principal of Marshall High in Chicago's west side ghetto, Robert Saddler inherited "one of Chicago's worst disasters—youngsters partying with tape recorders, necking in the halls, ignoring the bells for class, completely out of control." Through intensive community involvement, insistent stress on achievement, clear discipline codes, stimulation of academic competition and consistent support for teachers, Saddler and his staff turned Marshall High into a viable, effective school. (Saddler is now Superintendent of District 7 on Chicago's far west side.)

Yet throughout most of Chicago's 559 schools, failures multiply. A 60-year history of segregation, discrimination and contempt for minority education cannot

be undone by good intentioned rhetoric in a consent decree. Dr. Blair, the Deputy Superintendent for Instruction, sees her own efforts as immeasurably aided by Superintendent Love's commitment to improve the quality of education throughout the system. "That's her mission. With that behind me, my job's relatively easy." Yet for Assemblywoman Carole Moseley Braun, "Ruth Love is sitting on top of a garbage can."

This is the second of two articles on Chicago schools. Future articles will examine the school systems in Los Angeles and Atlanta.

Norm Fruchter is currently a Revson fellow at Teachers College, Columbia University.

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INPRINT

VIETNAM



An American general who worked with Ho Chi Minh claims he could have served American policy in Asia.

But Donovan stressed President Franklin Roosevelt's instructions that the OSS was to stay clear of French attempts to regain its lost colony. Indochina was occupied by the Japanese in 1940, though the French were allowed to remain as administrators until March 1945 when the Japanese took over completely.

Donovan "warned me," Patti writes, "to anticipate considerable pressure to depart from our neutral stance from other quarters, aside from the French. There were, he said, many pro-colonial supporters among American oil and rubber interests, there were ideological enthusiasts for a return of France to its colonial empire, and there was British and Dutch support for French colonialist policies in Southeast Asia."

In this context of international intrigue Patti was instructed to collaborate with Ho Chi Minh, the leader of the revolutionary Viet Minh. In 1942-43, the French and Chinese had refused to cooperate with the OSS and had conspired to keep the U.S. in the dark about their intelligence activities. The French actively courted the British to exclude the OSS from intelligence information.

According to Patti, the OSS was well aware of Ho's assets regarding intelligence gathering and guerrilla war and the fact that he had already cooperated with the U.S. on a part-time basis in propaganda activities. Furthermore, Ho had been trying since August 1945 to enlist Washington's support in the Viet Minh's struggle for independence and approval to fight alongside the allies against the Japanese. Earlier Ho had sought to report French and Japanese troop movement information to his OSS and U.S. Office of War Information contacts.

With the March 1945 Japanese coup in Indochina, the flow of intelligence, limited as it was, was cut off. The OSS, for the

In May 1945, Patti set up a full-scale OSS Secret Intelligence operation for Indochina, gathering intelligence and harassing the Japanese, as well as engaging in clandestine projects. In June, Ho offered to make available 1,000 "well-trained" Viet Minh guerrillas for OSS operations against the Japanese. At the time of Ho's offer, the French were balking at joining the allied battle against the Japanese. And Patti's enthusiasm for using the Viet Minh guerrillas was shared neither by his superiors nor by the French and Chinese.

After the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August 1945, the Japanese turned over control of Indochina to the floundering government of emperor Bao Dai, which asked the Viet Minh to form a government. Within six days, the Viet Minh consolidated power in the

In June 1945, Ho Chi Minh offered 1,000 guerrillas for OSS work.

Tonkin, Annam and Cochinchina regions. As Patti writes, "The Viet Minh was the people's party, the party which promised independence, freedom from foreign domination, civil liberties and economic opportunity. Even if it had been openly labeled communist it would not have mattered because the Vietnamese at large fully supported its aims."

Foreign troops.

But the allied plans for the transition to peace in Indochina soon revealed the great powers' post-war intentions. The Chinese were to take over from the Japanese north of the 16th parallel, while the British were to occupy temporarily the territory south of

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ment and paving the way for a French reoccupation than in pursuing their declared mission: in fact they were ignoring the Japanese forces which were still fully armed."

While the allied military stood idly by in September 1945, French troops went on a violent rampage in Saigon, sparking the war between the French and the Viet Minh. Although Paris claimed willingness to negotiate an end to the fighting, the French bargaining position was predicated on the assumption that France was still sovereign. In the meantime, as the talks remained stalled, troops were being mobilized to buttress the French military position in Indochina. By October, the Viet Minh were pushed out of Saigon into the countryside by the French with the aid of British and Japanese troops and air forces.

Although the official position of the new Truman administration toward Indochina remained unchanged from the Roosevelt administration's stance of neutrality, Patti observes that "we [the U.S.] were no longer actively opposing French intentions to take over Indochina, by force of arms if necessary."

As the Vietnamese anti-colonial struggle intensified in the late '40s and early '50s, Washington stepped up its aid to the French war effort. Patti makes clear the American decision to assume the responsibility for defending the basic pre-war economic and political order in the third world to protect imperial interests compelled Washington to side more openly with European colonialism in the post-war years. By this time, the charge that Ho Chi Minh was a communist puppet of the Soviet Union served to obscure the meaning of the American course in Southeast Asia.

But Patti argues history need not have turned out this way. "Ho was more concerned with Viet Nam's independence and sovereign viability than with following the interests and dictates of Moscow and Peking," adding "With American support Ho might have adopted some form of neutrality in the East-West conflict and maintained the DRV [Democratic Republic of Vietnam] as a neutral and durable bulwark against Chinese expansionism southward.... Were it not for our 'communist blinders,' Ho could well have served the larger purpose of American policy in Asia."

Jack Colhoun is a historian and former editor of AMEX-Canada, the Vietnam war era magazine of U.S. war resisters in Canada.

The unwanted American ally

Why Viet Nam? Prelude to America's Albatross

By Archimedes L.A. Patti
University of California Press,
612 pp., \$19.50

By Jack Colhoun

From a key vantage point and with a keen eye, Archimedes Patti watched as the Vietnamese anticolonial war against the French began. As World War II drew to a close, most American foreign policy analysts considered the events in Southeast Asia to be of marginal interest to Washington. But the gathering forces of history Patti records in *Why Viet Nam?* were to presage one of the main themes of the emerging post-World War II era: the contest between third world national liberation movements and the forces of imperialism.

After the Japanese had been defeated in 1945, but before the French had reimposed themselves in Indochina, the U.S. had the opportunity, Patti believes, to align with the growing anti-colonial struggles of the third world. Instead Uncle Sam sided with the European colonialists, whose grip on their Southeast Asian colonies had been weakened by the war, to aid the reestablishment of French colonial rule in Indochina. By the mid-'50s, the U.S. assumed the role of chief defender of imperialism in

Southeast Asia and elsewhere.

As a staunch foe of colonialism, Patti writes, "Despite our proud heritage of anticolonialism, our Wilsonian principle of self-determination, and Rooseveltian pronouncements of independence for subject peoples, we turned a deaf ear to Vietnamese plans for liberation from foreign domination and colonial rule." Had Washington recognized the independent Vietnamese regime headed by Ho Chi Minh and the Viet Minh in 1945, the bloody 30-year Vietnamese liberation struggle could have been avoided.

Patti was as well placed as any American official to draw this conclusion. In 1944, he was selected by Gen. William Donovan, director of the wartime Office of Strategic Services, to head a new OSS mission in Indochina. From its base in China the mission collected intelligence and conducted clandestine operations in Indochina. During that time, Patti got to know Ho better than any American official, sometimes seeing him two and three times a day, until the OSS mission was terminated in October 1945.

International spying.

In briefing Patti for the assignment, Donovan warned him the postwar battle for control over Indochina had already begun.

first time, was authorized to work with "all resistance groups," including the Viet Minh. Patti was pleased: "I felt [Ho] could be trusted as an ally against the Japanese. I saw that his ultimate goal was to attain American support for the cause of a free Viet Nam and felt that desire presented no conflict with American policy."

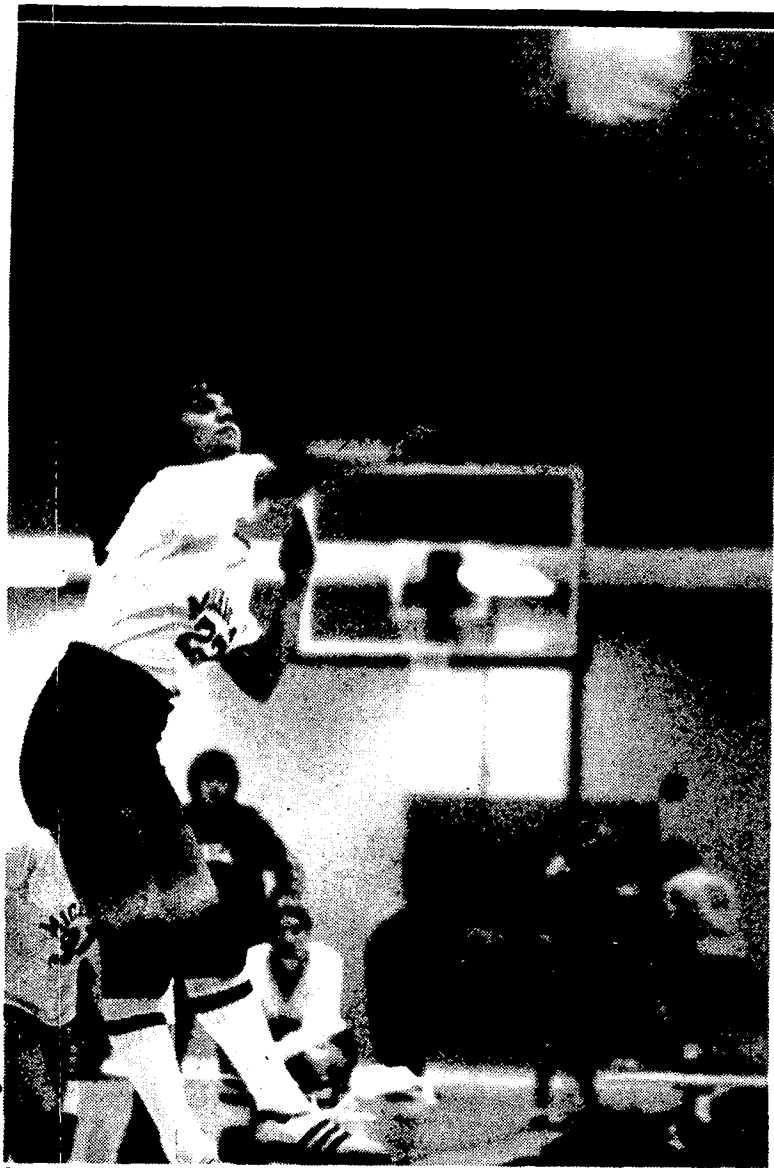
the parallel until the Japanese were disarmed and repatriated. As Patti notes, however, "For two weeks the Chinese had shown more concern with looting, pillaging and despoiling the land than with the Japanese they had come to disarm. Concurrently, the British in the south were doing more toward dismantling the Viet Minh govern-



Hazardous Inheritance

In his work, *Hazardous Inheritance*, French anti-nuclear artist, JAD, depicts in brilliant blues, oranges and greens, a fleet-footed Hercules propelling the atomic menace far from the planet. Originally an abstract painter, JAD became concerned about nuclear issues in Tahiti, the site of French atomic testing, and has since marched in demonstrations throughout the world. (In Hiroshima, his huge 6'x8' paintings were carried before 40,000 protesters.) His world tour will finish in Paris where he will present thousands of signatures he collected to ban A-testing to French authorities. (Hall Gardner)

SPORTSCENE



Steve Kagon

Wave goodbye to free viewing of sports events

Advertisers will look for higher paying consumers on cable TV.

By Lee Ballinger

The Golden Goose that is sports television is beginning its descent to earth, wounded by the shrapnel thrown up by a disintegrating world economy. A recent study showed that ratings for all the major college bowls, *Wide World of Sports*, the Indy 500, and even the Super Bowl are on the decline. Since Americans are as sports crazy as ever, the drop can be attributed in part to the growth of sports program-

ming on cable TV. Yet sports is not on television for our enjoyment, but as an advertising vehicle for corporate sponsors. TV grew into the number one advertising medium during a period when the average American had more money each and every year to spend on whatever products caught his fancy. This is no longer true. Advertisers will slowly back away from the mass sports market and concentrate on the limited pay cable viewers who have more disposable income. The current bonanza of sports programming is only a fleeting moment in the transition from totally free televised sports to universal pay-per-view. We are merely in the eye of a storm as several corporate giants maneuver for the right to put parking meters on our TV sets. Enjoy it while you can.

I hope that Muhammad Ali is serious when he says that the disastrous entry into the ring against

Trevor Berbick was his last fight. Ali's lamentable comeback attempts threaten to obscure his rightful place in history. I remember sitting around the mill late at night a couple of years ago, arguing with a bunch of guys about Ali. A white welder from West Virginia, heavyset and at least 60 years old, walked up and listened for about 15 minutes. Finally, he stepped forward and said, "Muhammad Ali is the greatest man who ever lived. He did more than everyone else in the country put together to stop the war in Vietnam. He saved my son's life. I will not stand for any more criticism of him."

It seems that the real reason Ali has kept on boxing is that he cannot figure out what else to do.

Ali is confronted with a decision he has yet to make. Will Ali follow the logic of his business investments and embrace the position recently taken by *Sepia* magazine that unions have never done anything for blacks and that black workers should never go on strike? Or will he follow the lead of the black women workers at Sanderson Farms in Laurel, Miss., whose long and bitter strike inspired a nationwide support campaign and was recounted in the film *Resurgence*?

December saw USC emerge on top in the NCAA women's volleyball tournament. This is the first year the NCAA has offered women's championships and they have already enticed 95 percent of the schools in the Association for Intercollegiate Athletics for Women (AIAW) to desert the ship that brought them over. The carrot dangling from the NCAA stick is money—travel expenses, facilities, TV contracts. But the NCAA could care less about opportunity for women athletes. They continue to lobby against Title IX enforcement and will be free to eliminate all money-losing women's sports as soon as they finish off the AIAW.

Reprinted with permission from *In Your Face!*, a monthly newsletter (All-Star Features, Box 1041, Warren, OH 44485) by Lee Ballinger, an Ohio steelworker.

Powers that be in basketball

The Breaks of the Game
By David Halberstam
Knopf, 362 pp., \$15

By John Judis

David Halberstam, author of *The Powers That Be* and *The Best and the Brightest*, spent the 1979-80 season following around the Portland Trailblazers, the National Basketball Association team that with Bill Walton at center won the league championship in 1977. By 1979, an injured Walton had been traded away to the San Diego Clippers and the magic of the championship years was but a memory. The Trailblazers were desperately trying to rebuild.

But as Halberstam explains, the Trailblazer's travails coincided with that of professional basketball itself. With a national TV audience in hand, professional basketball grew in the '60s and '70s from a northern urban to a national spectator sport. Anticipating growing revenues, basketball's owners expanded the league and its schedule, which now stretches from the middle of the football season to the middle of the baseball season. At the same time, basketball players, inspired by the civil rights movement and a growing trend toward unionization among high-paid professionals, bargained up salaries to keep in line with owners' profits.

But there was a catch. League expansion diluted team talent; the onerous schedule and the long, multi-team playoff schedule led players to treat the regular season as an extension of the exhibition season. While basketball playoffs retained their value as sport and entertainment, the regular season games increasingly became neither, and were displaced in the affection of fans and network executives by the



more diverse, unpredictable college game. (CBS is now threatening to drop its Sunday afternoon telecasts of NBA games.)

Basketball's inner drama, like that of any sport, is provided by the pursuit of physical excellence—which some philistines reduce to either capitalist competitiveness or male chauvinism. The athlete's greatest adversary is the

imperfection of his or her own body. Bill Walton's physical rise and fall, as told admirably by Halberstam, would have moved an ancient Athenian as much as it saddens a contemporary American basketball fan.

But the pursuit of excellence also must often overcome social and economic barriers. Halberstam tells the story of several of

Portland's black players: Kermit Washington, a mild-mannered, soft-spoken power forward who had to teach himself to be aggressive and was then fined and suspended when he slugged and nearly killed a white player in a fight; Maurice Lucas, whose ghetto pride was challenged by the Portland owners' refusal to pay him what most coaches and players thought to be his worth; Billy Ray Bates, an illiterate son of a Mississippi sharecropper, whose amazing natural talent was almost not enough to overcome the obstacles of his origins.

Portland is the focus, but Halberstam also touches upon the personnel of the teams Portland plays during the season. Along the way, the sports fan will learn why the Boston Celtics traded promising guard Paul Westphal and why the Seattle Supersonics unloaded playoff most valuable player Dennis Johnson after the 1980 season. But a fan will also learn something about what is happening to sports in America.

CALENDAR

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CHICAGO, IL

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sented by Salem Committee on Latin America at Willamette University. Topics include: Historical Perspectives, Political Prisoners and Refugees, Indigenous Peoples, Attempts at Social Change, Relationship between U.S. and Central American Economies, U.S. Foreign Policy in Central America. Registration is \$5.00/\$3.00 for elders, students and unemployed. Contact: SCOLA, Suite 325, 3000 Market St., NE, Salem, OR 97301. (503) 588-7400.

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Teens

Continued from page 16

at first, more gang members began attending the Community Values meetings once it became clear that the program was becoming more than just talk. Muhammad was made the head of the program's Youth Participation Committee, and soon Lewis, Driver and other Lovers began spending time at Richardson's house, playing pool and keeping themselves busy doing chores. She hired several more guards, and now AC Shamoan, citing reduced vandalism, began hiring gang members to work for AC. By midsummer, Oakland Police Department Deputy Chief John Ream was able to describe the reduction in violence and vandalism in East Oakland in general and on the buses in particular as "dramatic."

In July, the Lovers and the Community Values Program organized something called the Community Leadership Picnic in Joaquin Miller Park. Community Values brought a few cops and bus drivers and, at the height of the baseball strike, two players from the Oakland

A's, Rickey Henderson and Mike Norris: the Lovers managed to bring 50 gang members, representing 11 different groups. Together they ate hot dogs and talked and played 22 innings of baseball until the sun set, and the gang members met several of the bus drivers they had formerly spent their time hassling. One of them, Cecelia Chiles, became an honorary member of the Lovers, as did both Norris and Henderson. Chiles, Shamoan and the Lovers then began talking about organizing group members to pressure businesses for jobs and do school assemblies at community schools, and the idea for Bay Area United Youth was born. They got underway in early September.

Pushing businesses.

"The thing to remember," says Chiles, "is that this is something the kids themselves got going. Nobody ever went to them and said, 'What do you want?' before, and now we know that what they want isn't drugs and crime and violence, but to be an active part of the community."

"The problem we've had so far," explains Tony Driver, "is in convincing businesses to listen to us. If Big Business would put into it, they could save East

Oakland. We've got a waiting list now—everybody that knows about the program wants a job. But trying to convince a business to come into East Oakland ain't easy.

"They [business] have to be willing to do some training. The people who are causing the problem with vandalism don't have experience. But they're smart. You've got to be smart to put over a con, to figure out how to take somebody's TV set."

Vernon Lewis agrees that jobs are the solution, but thinks the community's commitment has to start earlier.

"When you grow up down here, you look around and all you see is nothing. Kids wander

off in their own world. You get frustrated and angry. If you don't have a car, you get on a bus. And you start taking your frustrations out on the first person you see, the driver."

The organization may not have put an end to vandalism in East Oakland, but the rate has certainly dropped. And the decline has spread to other categories of crime as well. But if jobs fail to pan out, the trend could easily reverse itself.

"Business has got to carry its weight," says Driver. "Look at all the money they're throwing at downtown Oakland, with the convention center and the hotels and all that. Why don't they throw some of that down our

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way and help East Oakland, where the help is needed?

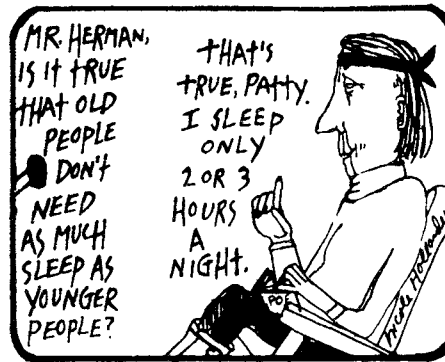
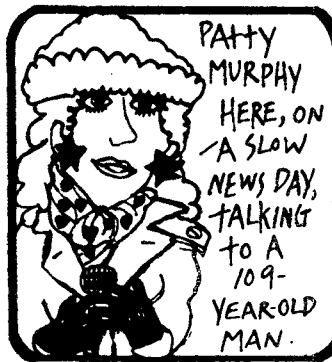
Cecelia Chiles agrees that apathy has been the group's main stumbling block.

"The young people are doing something to clean up their act. You'd think everybody from the business community to the media would be jumping on this. They've already reduced vandalism by 80 percent, and businesses are reporting less shoplifting. But nobody's noticed. But let one of them go snatch somebody's purse and he'd be on the Channel 7 news."

W.A. Van Winkle writes for the East Bay Express in Berkeley, CA, where this story first appeared in longer form.

SYLVIA

by Nicole Hollander



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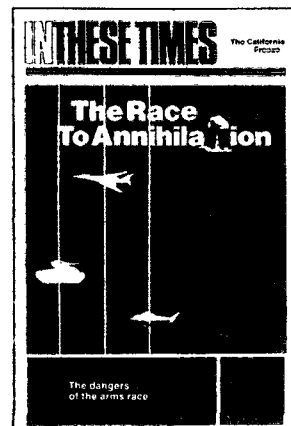
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WAS

A

TEENAGE VANDAL

By W.A. Van Winkle

THE ACT CRAZY MOB, THE 90TH Avenue Lovers and the Broadway Hustlers used to be blamed for half the crime in East Oakland—but now they're doing special anti-crime assemblies at junior highs and high schools throughout Oakland, working as special agents of AC Transit and scheduling flag football games with the Oakland Police Department. The graffiti on the buses, their principal calling card, is fast disappearing. Sir Pimp, Sir Bounce and Mugsy have stopped advertising, and East Oakland's respectable citizens—teachers, cops, ministers and the like—now correct anyone who calls the 90th Avenue Lovers, the Act Crazy Mob, or any of the other groups "street gangs." They are now "youth organizations."

The "youth organizations" represented by the Bay Area United Youth come from a small portion of East Oakland comprising five of Oakland's 35 police beats. In 1980 there were 304 armed robberies here, as well as 119 purse snatchings, 1,508 residential burglaries, 435 auto thefts, and—well, you get the idea.

When the unemployment rate among young black people hit 50 percent nationwide in 1980, it hit East Oakland particularly hard. While no one compiles unemployment figures for as small an area as this one stretch of East Oakland, local welfare agencies generally agree that a 70 percent unemployment rate would be a serviceable guess.

Most of the "youth organizations" that now make up BAUY first got together in summer 1980, just as the age-group's unemployment rate was beginning to go through the roof. There were no YMCA-type recreational facilities for them—and teenage boys are not particularly interested in that sort of recreation anyway. Teenage boys, as a rule, are interested in teenage girls, and for that sort of recreation it helps to have money or a car, or both. The businesses in East Oakland are, for the most part, pretty marginal, and the few jobs they were able to provide were quickly snatched up, leaving hundreds of high-school-age boys with nothing better to do with their time than

ride the buses.

For more than a year, violent crime in East Oakland had been rising at an alarming rate, and crime on the buses had been rising even faster. The Oakland Police Department had organized a community crime prevention program, headed by East Oakland resident Mary Johnson, but the budget was only large enough to fund a few, sparsely attended informational meetings. This drop in the bucket had no impact on crime, and East Oakland's bus routes threatened to become war zones. The police department responded with extra patrols, and Richardson Security, AC Transit's private security service, assigned more guards to the East Oakland bus lines; but neither move was very effective. There were beatings and stabbings both on the buses and at the stops. The victims, increasingly, were the elderly and the helpless, and, as the situation went out of control, the community began to get organized.

War on the bus.

Mary Johnson, together with a group of AC Transit drivers, a few civic groups, some Oakland cops and a handful of concerned citizens, put together the Community Values Program—an expanded version of the crime prevention program of the Police Department. But although they raised enough money for signs and TV commercials, the deck was stacked against them from the start. The people who came to the meetings were the victims of crime, not the perpetrators, and the only solutions they were able to come up with were increased enforcement and citizen awareness. The youth outreach effort only attracted the upper-class joiners. The underlying problem—youth unemployment—was never touched.

By spring 1981, crime on the buses was at an epidemic level, and it almost flashed into open war in April, when a Richardson Security guard on a bus approached Vernon Lewis—Mr. V. of the 90th Avenue Lovers—and told him to turn down his radio. When Lewis refused, the guard told him to get off the bus. Again Lewis refused, and the guard tried to throw him off. Other members of the Lovers, and members of other gangs who were also on board, retaliated. The driver called the police, and before it was all over the cops had a near-riot on their hands.

The next morning, an East Oakland social worker and teacher named Yusef Ali Muhammad read the news in the *Oakland Tribune*. A 40-year-old Black Muslim, Muhammad is slight of build, soft-spoken and sensitive—hardly the sort to mediate a gang dispute. But Muhammad had also grown up in rough neighborhoods in Philadelphia and knew several members of the Lovers from the Oakland Street Academy, an alternative high school where he had taught for one semester that spring. Muhammad called Mr. V. and asked to attend a special meeting of the Lovers. The Lovers agreed.

"They were upset about what had happened on the bus," says Muhammad. "But they were more upset about unemployment. They seemed to be saying, 'If you give us no place to go and nothing to do, if you treat us like dirt, then we'll act like it.'"

"When they were done, I told them, 'Look, you guys are in a position to pressure the city for jobs.' I invited them to attend one of the Community Values meetings the next week, and about 10 of them showed up."

Loud complaints.

For the better part of an hour, the perpetrators of crime sat down with their victims and complained about unemployment, poverty, hopelessness and the frustration of being eager for work and unable to find it.

Then, when the Lovers had finished, two of the AC drivers stood up and told the Lovers what it was like to work alone on a bus being intimidated by violence-prone kids, having their orders to turn down radios ignored, having their passengers beaten while forced to sit helplessly behind the wheel. The cops weren't happy either. Nor was Josie Richardson, head of Richardson's Security. Robert Shamoon, general manager of AC Transit, got up to explain that vandalism on the buses cost him half-a-million every year and made his company's property look like hell.

When the recriminations had stopped, Muhammad brought Richardson to a truce with the Lovers. Richardson offered a deal: if the Lovers would use their influence with the other gangs in East Oakland to call a halt to violence and vandalism on the buses, then she would hire some of them as special security guards and would use her influence to get jobs for other gang members with AC or elsewhere. The Lovers agreed, and within a month three of them had been hired by Richardson.

Muhammad, Lewis and Tony Driver (the Lovers' "Sir Bounce") began to approach the Act Crazy Mob, the Foothill Hustlers and other street gangs with the proposition. Although interest was light

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Mark Sarfat